# ETERNAL EGYPT

JANUARY 2009 - ISSUE 0

## LOST in OBLIVION...

*The Reckoning of Time in Ancient Egypt*

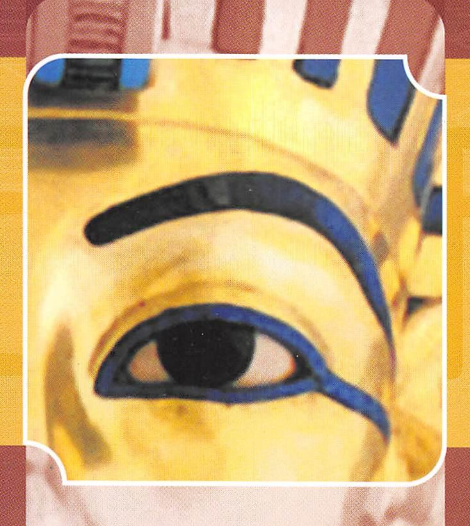
*A Short Adventure in Sinai*

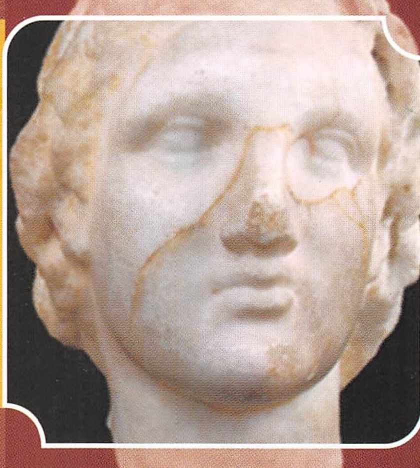
# www.eternalegypt.org

# مصر الخالدة

Voyagez sans quiter
votre domicile

Greco
Roman





سافر دون ان تترك مكانك

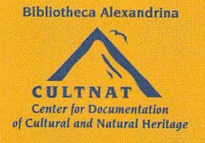
Travel without
leaving home

Pharaonic














Our warmest gratitude to the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT), for generously funding this issue of the magazine.

# ETERNAL EGYPT TOC

# ETERNAL EGYPT Team



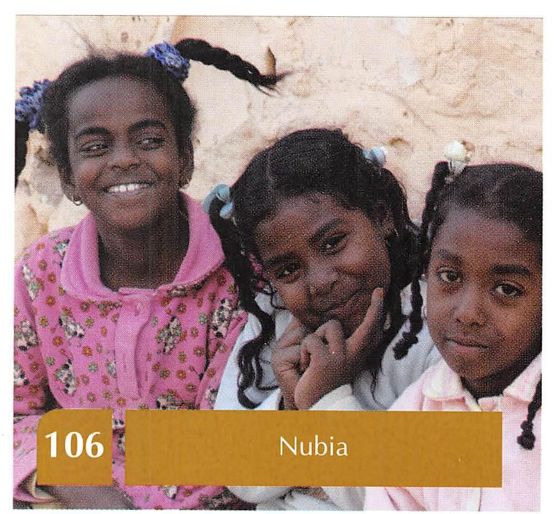
The Center for Documentation of Cultural and Natural Heritage (CULTNAT) is affiliated to Bibliotheca Alexandrina and supported by The Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT).

**Eternal Egypt Magazine is published by CULTNAT and funded by the MCIT.**

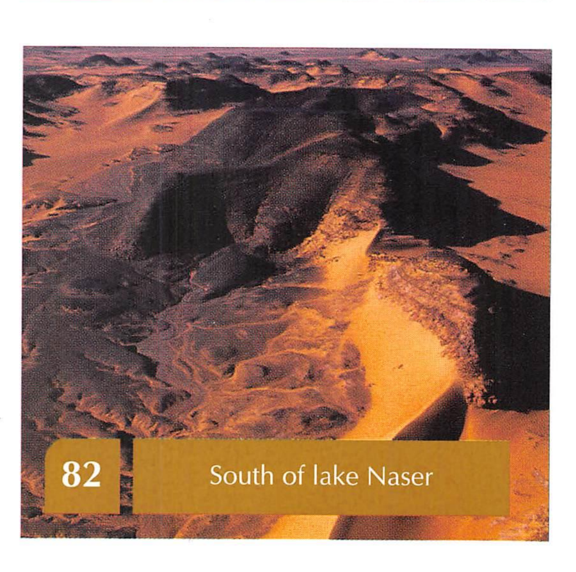
For Subscriptions & Advertising
The Center for Documentation
of Cultural and Natural Heritage (CULTNAT)

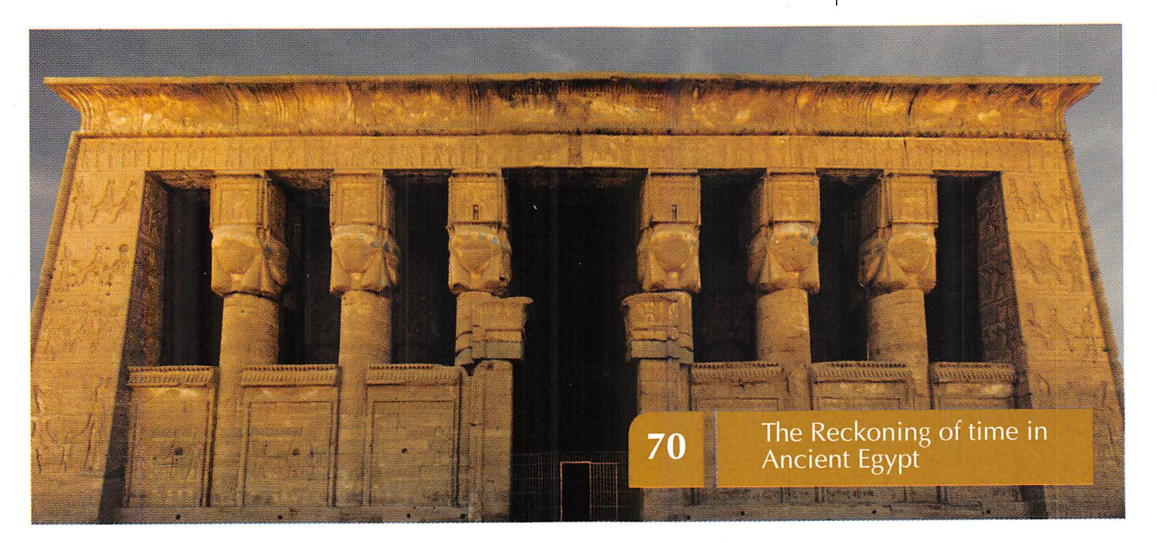
Smart Village: Cairo-Alexandria Road, Km 28, Giza, Egypt
tel: +(202) 3534 3222 - fax: +(202) 3539 2929
**www.cultnat.org - www.eternalegypt.org**
**www.globalegyptianmuseum.org**
Contact person: Mona Hossny **mhossny@mcit.gov.eg**



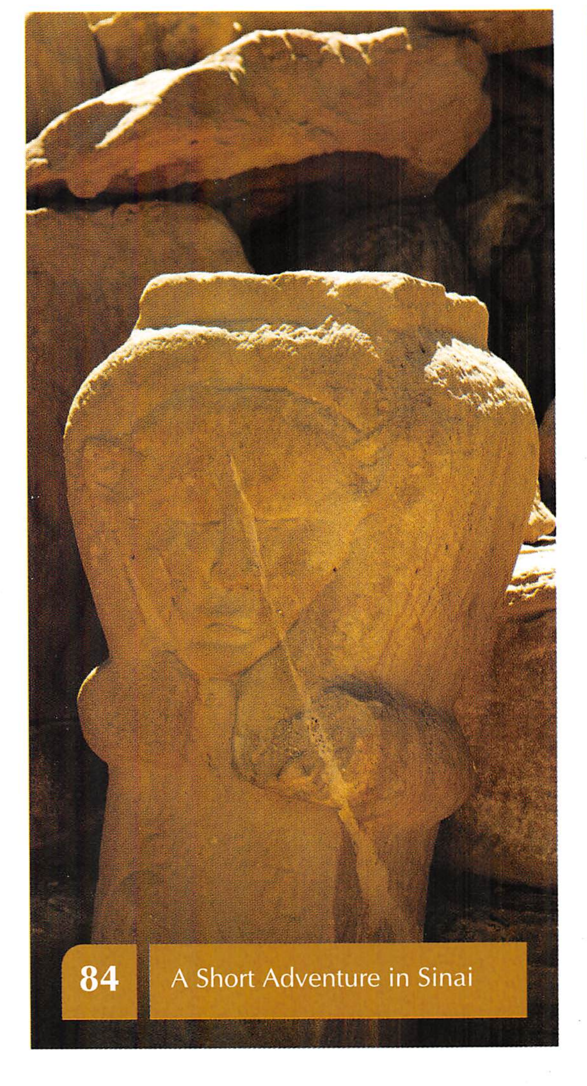





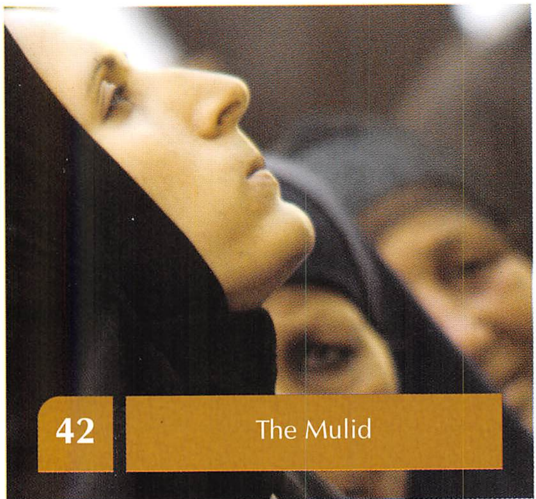
















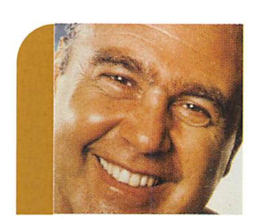


# CONTRIBUTORS



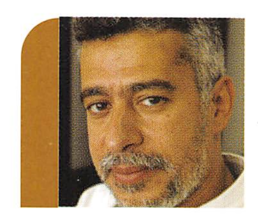
**Dr. Mohamed SALEH**

Dr. Saleh is the Egyptology Consultant at CULTNAT and the Former Director of the Egyptian Museum in Cairo and the Egyptology Unit of the Grand Egyptian Museum. He is a member of the German Archaeological Institute, the International Association of Egyptologists, the International Committee of Museums (ICOM) and the National Specialized Councils of Egypt "Cultural Heritage." He wrote eight books and numerous articles about Egyptology in addition to the text of the Pharaonic section of Eternal Egypt Website: www.eternalegypt.org



**Ayman TAHER**

Ayman Salah Taher, son of the renowned Egyptian painter Salah Taher, Born in 1946, is a professional photographer, painter and developer. He worked with the National Geographic team, both as a photographer and in the making of underwater documentaries. Ayman had the privilege of working with prominent names in the field of visual documentation like Eugene Clark the famed Oceanographer, Jacques Mayol whose life story was beautifully presented in the famous movie "The Big Blue" and Bruno Violetti with whom he did the documentary "Sea of the Pharaohs".



**Ayman KHOURY**

Director of the Imaging department in CULTNAT, Ayman is a communication Engineering graduate, professional Photographer and Video Artist. Fifteen years ago he started touring the Mawaled (Birthday Festivities of Muslim Saints) in Egypt and found his passion in the photographic documentation of these events.
Email: akhoury@mcit.gov.eg



**Malak WAHBA**

Malak Wahba is an architect/planner who specialises in cultural heritage, particularly in architecture of the nineteenth and twentieth century, Cartographic Heritage and Architectural Records. She holds a M.A. in Geography from McMaster University, Canada, and B.Sc. in Architecture from Cairo University, Egypt. Currently Head of the Tangible Heritage Section at Cultnat, Ms. Wahba manages several documentation programmes and projects.
Email: mwahba@mcit.gov.eg

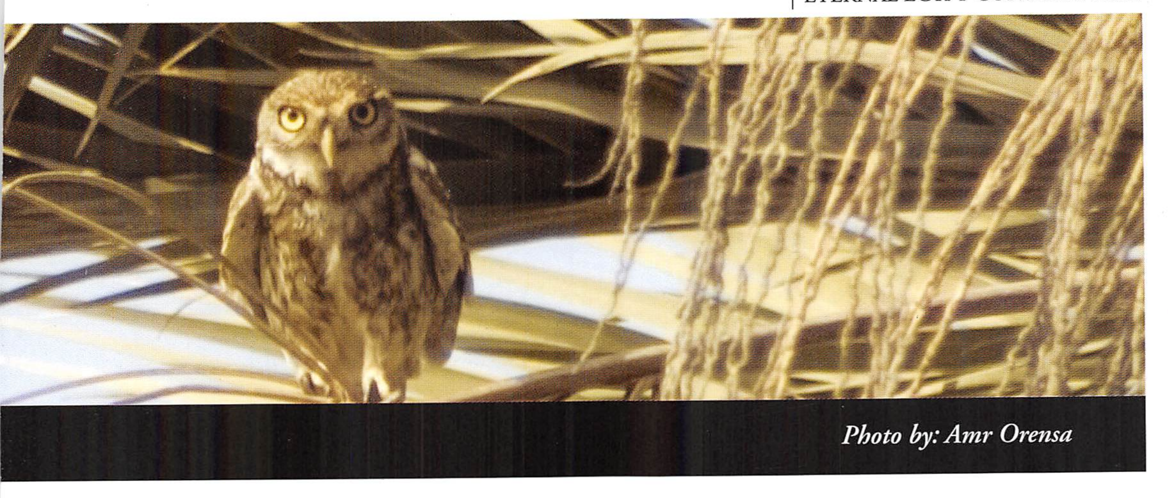
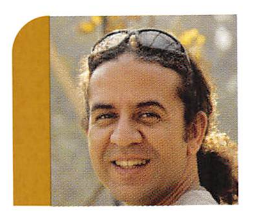


*Photo by: Amr Orensa*



**Su BAYFIELD**
Su Bayfield has travelled in Egypt for many years and written extensively on its archaeology. Having a passion for the history of Egypt as well as its Islamic culture, she combines the study of Egyptology with her love of the photographic image. Su lives in Cornwall in the UK.



**Mohamed EL HEBEISHY**
Mohamed El Hebeishy is a freelance travel writer and photographer who periodically freelances with Al-Ahram Weekly, Egypt Today, Turath, The Daily News and Horus. Mohamed is author and photographer of the recently released debut "Egypt Rediscovered", a photography-based book with short essays that attempts to shed some lights on the country's hidden treasures. When not on the road, Mohamed resides in Cairo.



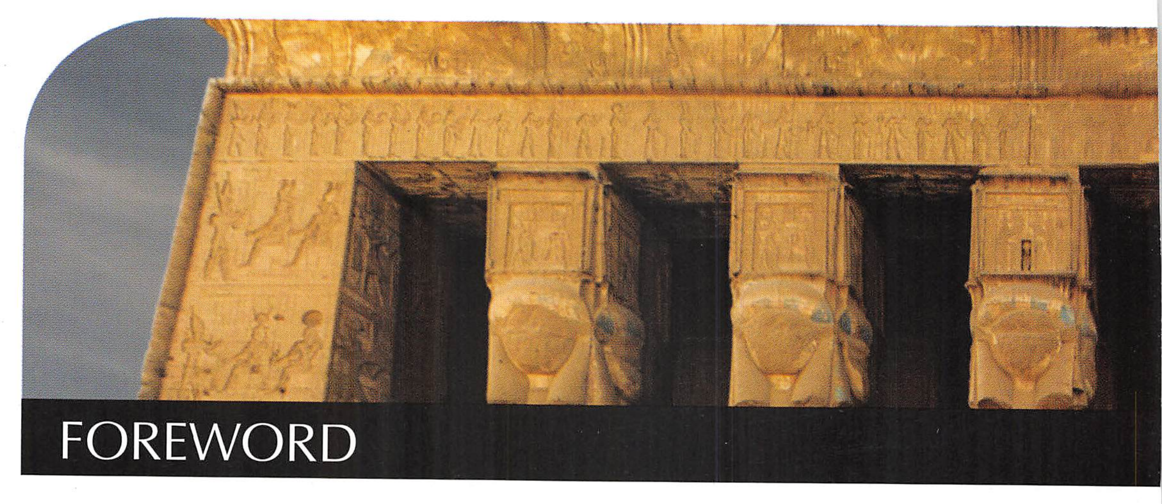
**Dr. Hala BARAKAT**
Hala N. Barakat has a Ph.D. in Paleoecology from the University of Aix-Marseille III, France. She is deputy director of CULTNAT and is in charge of the documentation of the natural heritage program as well as supervising the photographic, folkloric and musical heritage programs at CULTNAT.
Email: halabarakat@mcit.gov.eg

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

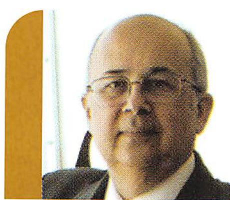
We are sincerely thankful to:



**Mona HENRY**
Mona Henry finished her graduate studies from Pratt Institute, New York, in the field of Graphic Design. Upon her return to Egypt, she freelanced as a graphic designer for several years until she established her own Graphic Design firm, Henry Graphix. Next to managing her firm, she is CULTNAT's consultant and Art director.
Email: mona@henrygraphix.com



# FOREWORD



## A NEW "ETERNAL EGYPT"

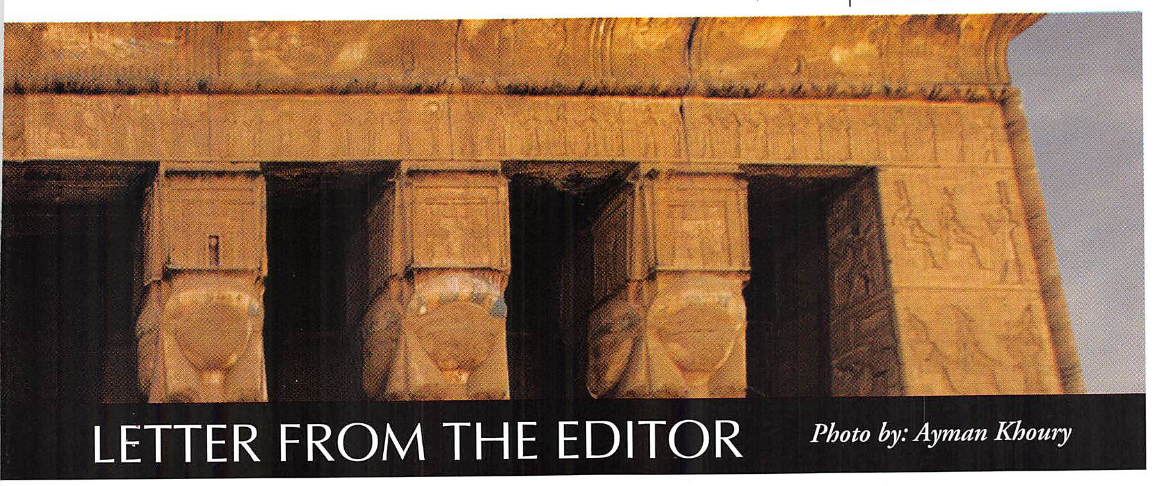
The Center for Documentation of Cultural and Natural Heritage (CULTNAT) has done a magnificent job of bringing the tools of the 21st century to document the 7000–year–old cultural heritage of Egypt, as well as its natural wonders. In so doing it has been a pioneer both in generating content and in devising innovative ways of presenting it. Its pioneering work has been recognized by patents (of the Culturama) and many awards and prizes including the "Cultural Heritage in the Digital Age" prize at the World Summit of Information Society and the Stockholm Challenge Award. The website "Eternal Egypt" has been recognized in many forums as a true exemplar of this type of sophisticated work. In addition, the staff of CULTNAT has been at the hub of major efforts not only to document the heritage but to contribute to its better management and preservation. Thanks to these efforts, many treasures were preserved, knowledge has been safely kept and endangered heritage became accessible for Egypt's future generations.

I salute their work as being truly representative of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina's mission: to integrate state-of-the-art information technology with expertise in various aspects of our heritage.

CULTNAT is a true leader in the digitization, preservation, and management of heritage. Akin to compiling pieces of a puzzle, it arduously compiled and documented folklore traditions, photographs, musical compositions, architectural details, as well as natural and archaeological data in order to draw up, in the end, its own spectacular, modern digital version of the famed Description de l'Egypte.

I was therefore delighted that CULTNAT decided to publish this culture-oriented magazine, "Eternal Egypt", bringing its characteristic excellence and artistic presentation to another sphere of the national and international cultural scene. I hope that, like its website namesake, the magazine will achieve great success, help eternalize the beauties of eternal Egypt and gain the readership it deserves. I express my thanks to Dr. Fathi Saleh and every member of his dedicated team, and welcome this new "Eternal Egypt", long may it thrive.

**Dr. Ismail Serageldin**
**Librarian of Alexandria**
**Director of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina**



# LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

*Photo by: Ayman Khoury*



## DREAMING
### our way through

This is the dream of every intellectual; to have our own Egyptian "National Geographic" like magazine especially in a country with such wealth of heritage and beauty like Egypt. The idea started unintentionally when our deputy director for natural heritage, Dr. Hala Barakat, started organizing monthly exhibitions displaying different cultural and natural aspects of the Egyptian heritage at the center. Consequently, we ended up with a wealth of visual material that can be transformed with some effort into such type of magazine.

A professional team was formed to work on the zero issue (or experimental issue) especially after the joining of Mona Hossny, my assistant who had a previous artistic and publishing experience and with the presence of the exceptionally talented graphics designer Mona Henry. With these both ladies' efforts, the zero issue started to shape up into a very promising piece of art.

A question was raised at the beginning about the language in which we should publish this work. It was obvious that there was no question about having it in Arabic, since there is a conspicuous shortage in the Egyptian Media in this type of magazines.

But obvious too was the importance of the English language to us because of the duty we have, to make sure that our heritage is well presented through Egyptian eyes to the foreigners. So finally we decided to publish it in both languages. Yet for the zero issue, since it is experimental, we decided to bind ourselves to one language only, this time English because it can address both communities.

As for the title of the magazine, we thought of many alternatives and finally settled for the title we use for our famous website which is "Eternal Egypt". The reason for this choice is first, we believe that the heavenly riches of Egypt are indeed eternally present in the sub-consciousness of all human beings. Second, since "Eternal Egypt" website is quite popular now, by linking the magazine to it, it will automatically be linked in the reader's mind to our Center for Documentation of Cultural and Natural Heritage 'Cultnat'. I must finally ask you to sit back and enjoy the eternal journey with us in the beloved land of gold.

**Prof. Dr. Fathi Saleh**
**Director of CULTNAT**


Photos by: Amr Orensa

# THE ANSWER WILL ALWAYS BE EGYPT



When Dr. Fathi assigned me to work on this magazine "Eternal Egypt", I felt like a small drop of water in a vast ocean full of riches. How can a drop of water perceive the ocean? But then I remembered the holographic universe theory and said to myself: "well, maybe I am the ocean". I was once asked: "If you believe in reincarnation, where would you like to be born in the next life?" and the answer came with no hesitation: "In Egypt".

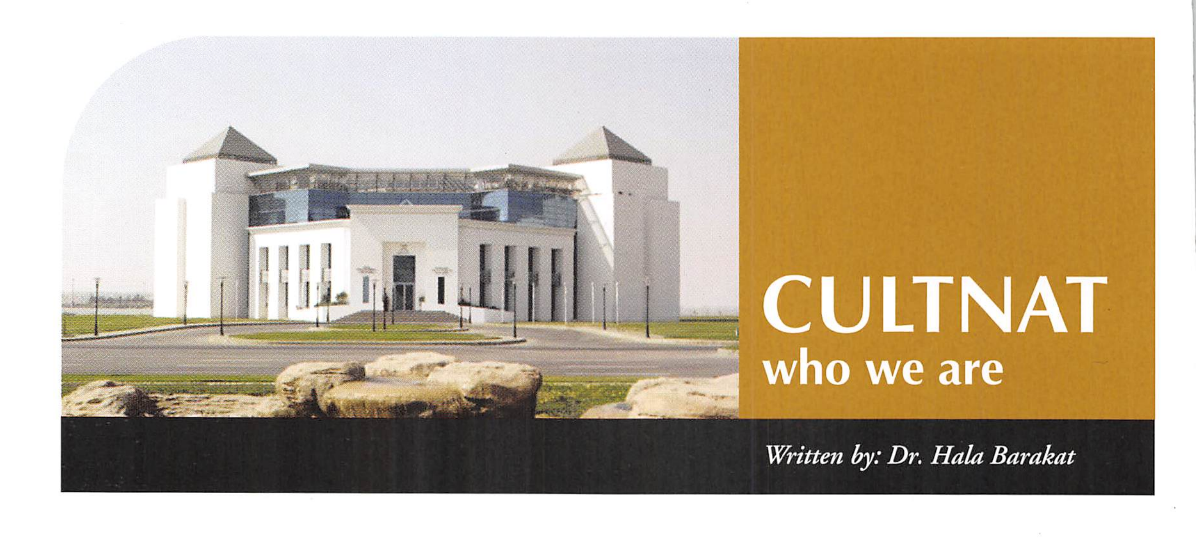
No matter how stressful life is in Egypt nowadays, magic is always in the air. No matter how exhausted this old land seems, its light, charm and wisdom are never failing. I'm very much convinced of Carl Gustav Jung's theory of 'Collective Consciousness', he believed that a community shares one consciousness on collective levels that is shaped by the spiritual, mental, emotional, vital and physical experiences of its members. I believe this without doubt because on a smaller scale, I'm sure this happened to everyone of us, when you enter a room where there was happiness or laughter, you feel it and just being in this room lightens your heart up, and if the room witnessed quarrels and anger, you cannot miss feeling the tension right away, it is all in the air. Air carries all the information just as water does.

Dr. Masaru Emoto from Japan proved that water has memory and by analyzing the water crystals one can identify the kind of energy that existed around this water. For example, crystals of water that has been blessed by people have beautiful clear shapes just like diamonds, and crystals of water that was exposed to sad songs or negative thoughts are yellowish and have very irregular disturbed shapes. Knowing that water consists 70% of our bodies, one should really reconsider before saying or doing anything that might disturb it, this is how we contaminate our systems.

The land of Egypt is full of sacred spots; temples, churches, mosques, monasteries and trees, water springs, mountains and caves of holy men. In my opinion, the collective consciousness of Egypt that is in the air, water and every living being is intensely rich with sanctity, wisdom, compassion and grace. From the time of the great Pharaohs until today, an enormous amount of pure souls walked this land, breathed this air and drank this water. They brought light to the whole world and knowledge to mankind of how to lead righteous lives. Nothing of this is lost; it is still here in this land, my Egypt. But life goes on in cycles, and where we are today might seem night that is sure bestowed on us for a great purpose, of which the simpler obvious part is to get to know the day.

Yes, if there is reincarnation, I choose Egypt to be my destination. One life is certainly not enough to discover the wonders Egypt has to offer and whatever we present in this magazine, will always leave us thirsty for more. It cannot possibly exceed the outer crust of Egypt's heritage.

**Mona Hossny**
**Executive Editor**




*Written by: Dr. Hala Barakat*

# The Center for Documentation of Cultural & Natural Heritage

At **CULTNAT**, our **mandate** is to document the various aspects of Egypt's **tangible** and **intangible** cultural heritage as well as its natural heritage.

The Center aims to **increase** public awareness of Egypt's **cultural** and **natural heritage** through the **dissemination** of information using all available media.

Since its establishment in the year 2000, CULTNAT has become a landmark on a regional and worldwide scale in the application of a comprehensive approach towards the use of telecommunications and information technology for the documentation of the various aspects of heritage.

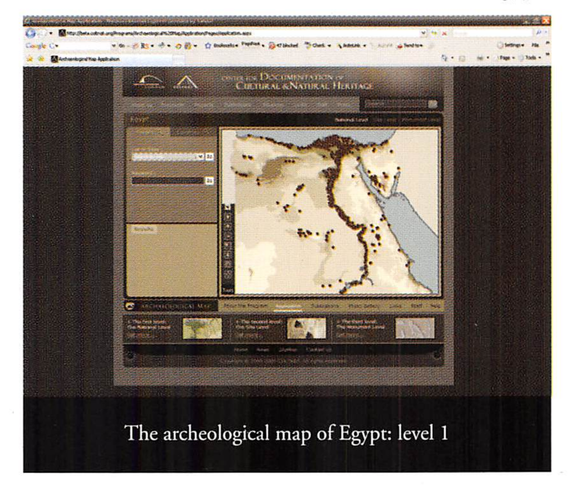
We are affiliated to Bibliotheca Alexandrina and supported by the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology. Our mandate is to document the various aspects of Egypt's tangible and intangible cultural heritage as well as its natural heritage. This heritage encompasses various aspects of the human civilization, monitors the development of human livelihood and represents a great value. To achieve this goal, CULTNAT is making use of the most up-to-date information technology and is working in collaboration with national and international specialized organizations.

The Center aims to increase public awareness of Egypt's cultural and natural heritage through the dissemination of information using all available media, as well as building capacities of professionals in the field of documentation and management of heritage.

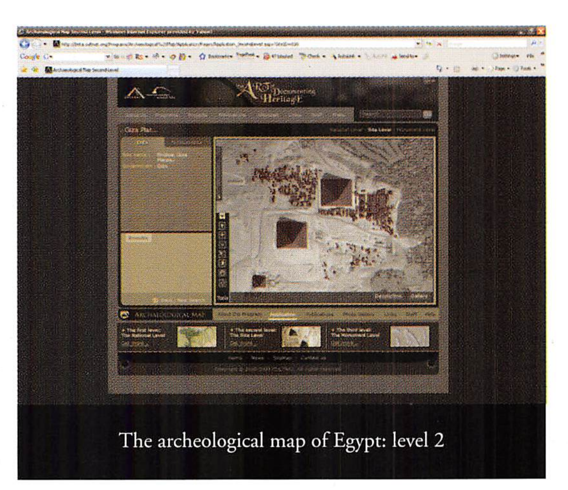
Egypt's wealth in archeological sites, architectural styles, arts, folklore and natural beauty is reflected in CULTNAT's various programs as follows:

## THE ARCHEOLOGICAL MAP OF EGYPT:

The archeological map of Egypt is the first complete inventory of all archeological sites in Egypt in a Geographic Information System (GIS) linked to an exhaustive database of the archeological sites, monuments and artifacts found all over Egypt.



The archeological map of Egypt: level 1



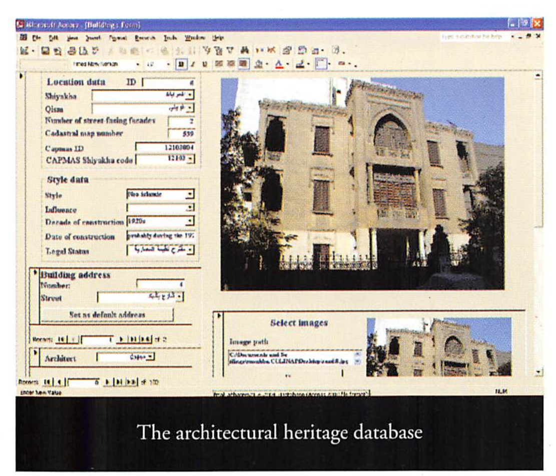

The archeological map of Egypt: level 2

The information is organized into three consecutive levels: The first is the national one, showing all sites on a large scale map and providing basic information about each site. At the second level, a detailed map shows the site and its components along with more information, while the third level provides the complete data of the monument with a plan of the structure and images. For a number of monuments, each wall is depicted with the relief or paintings along with the translation of the hieroglyphs, while for others, a 3-D model is available with the possibility of a virtual visit.

The amount of data collected so far and integrated in the program could furthermore be used for a wide variety of products, including archeological atlases, guides, CDs...etc.

## THE ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE OF EGYPT:

The purpose of this program is to document the nineteenth and twentieth century architectural heritage of Egypt, starting with the Downtown area of Cairo as a pilot project and continuing with more parts of Cairo and other cities. This project constitutes of a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) with an easy to browse database that includes extensive photographic documentation, all published material for each inventoried building, in addition to historic documents, maps and archival material.



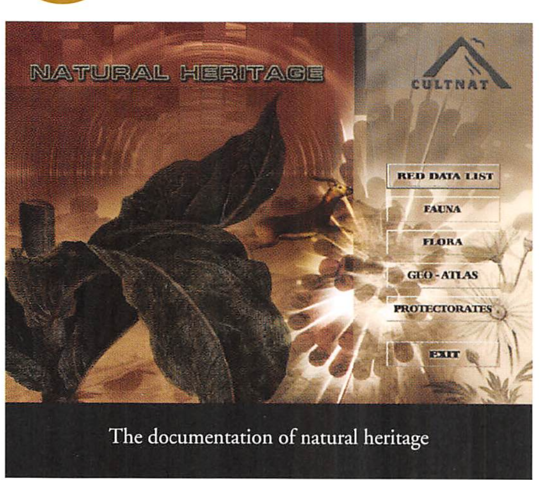

The architectural heritage database

This exhaustive database serves a variety of users ranging from decision makers to architects and historians. In the wealth of studies about architecture

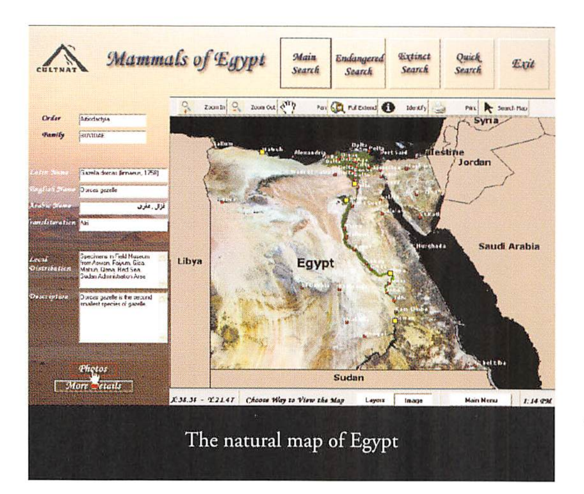
in Egypt, this is an unprecedented systematic digital approach that crowns the limited attempts of the dispersed few who have documented one aspect or another of Egyptian architecture. A series of thematic CD-ROMs, books, guides and other publications are extracted from this database serving as very effective cultural awareness tools.



## THE NATURAL HERITAGE OF EGYPT:




The documentation of natural heritage




The natural map of Egypt

The documentation of Egypt's natural heritage is a multi-disciplinary program aiming to document and disseminate information on the natural heritage of Egypt. The program involves the collection of all data available on protected areas and their components including detailed information on the Flora, Fauna, geological formations and the related cultural features. The data is further used to create a digital natural map of Egypt in Geographic Information System (GIS). The system is designed to be used as a monitoring, assessment and management tool by various stakeholders in the field of nature conservation and environmental policy making. It can also be useful to researchers of natural history and environmental studies, visitors of protectorates, and environmental NGOs. For the dissemination of information, a series of books, CDs and postcards were produced on various subjects related to the natural heritage.

## EGYPTIAN FOLKLORE:

Egypt's living traditions are embedded in a deep and colorful source stemming from various cultures that have enriched it over the millennia. CULTNAT is undertaking the task of documenting these traditions. A systematic approach is adopted in the compilation process and aims to build up the most comprehensive and inclusive library of scientific and audio-visual material.



Egyptian Traditional handicrafts

The library is designed to include a rich array that covers ethnological activities, popular themes, traditional feasts, celebrations, folktales, proverbs and

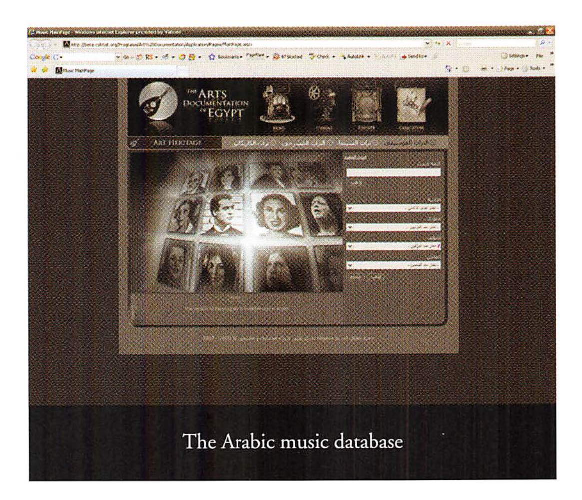
cycles of life. It also includes legends, customs, daily activities, cults of the saints, architectural and agricultural traditions, popular music, arts, crafts, popular superstitions, national costumes, jewelry, and mythological legends from Egyptian lands, deserts, rural and urban communities.

The information is used to publish a thesaurus of the Egyptian folklore (Al-Meknaz) as well as a series of books and online products about the traditional crafts in Fatimid Cairo and the traditions and practices during the holy month of Ramadan. Moreover, the program has produced a national action plan for the documentation of the Egyptian folklore.

## THE MUSICAL HERITAGE OF EGYPT:

CULTNAT aims to provide a better understanding of both our musical heritage and arts that have greatly developed during the earliest part of the twentieth century and which are in very serious danger of being lost forever. This is achieved through documenting, classifying and analyzing this heritage.

The Arabic music information system consists of three levels: the first level focuses on documenting basic information related to composers, lyrics, singers, modes, forms, and rhythms.




The Arabic music database

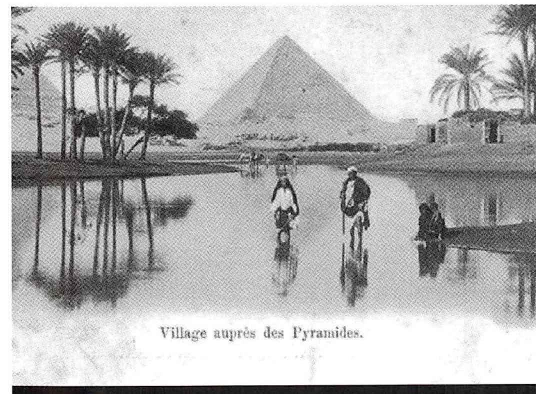
The second level compiles the complete works of artists with original lyrics, scores, audio and video clips whenever possible. The third level is a multimedia upgrade that targets the production of documented audio-visual deliverable based on the collected data as well as a detailed musical analysis of selected pieces by professional critics.

Such database will assist musical education in institutes and musical establishments and will provide a tremendous source of edutainment and fun to the general public.

## THE PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORY OF EGYPT:

At the turn of the twentieth century, the Middle East and Egypt in particular, became a destination that attracted a large number of pioneer photographers. Their works documented such vivid topics as archeological sites and excavations, local architecture, landscapes in addition to social life and daily activities of the local communities. The program aims to make such rare collections available for researchers, curators, and admirers of old photography through a number of publications including books and CDs and online.

Collections of famous photographers, from local and international archives and from private collections, are digitally documented. Glass plate negatives, vintage sepia toned albumen prints and selenium toned silver




View of the pyramids during Nile floods from "Lehnert and Landrock" collection.

sheets of the early twentieth century are classified in Egypt's first of its kind photographic heritage database, starting with the exclusive collection of Lehnert and

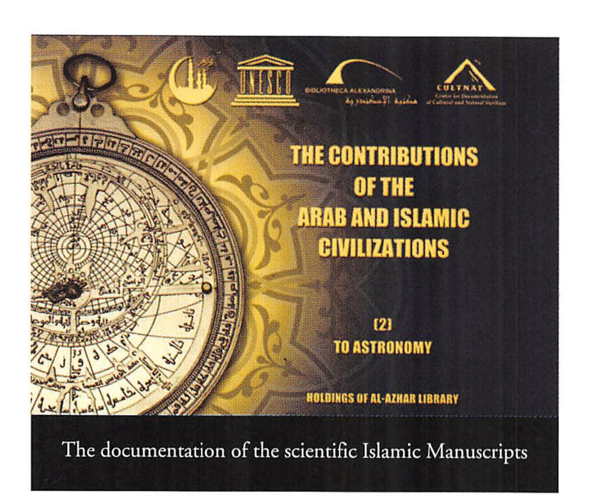
Landrock housing over 1200 black and white thematically assorted quality prints.



## THE SCIENTIFIC ISLAMIC MANUSCRIPTS HERITAGE:

The manuscript documentation program aims to document scientific Islamic manuscripts available in various institutions and private collections on the national and regional level, in order to build an electronic encyclopedia of manuscripts on sciences and mathematics that were produced during the peak of the Islamic period. A pilot project was carried out at the National Library of Egypt "Dar al Kutub" and covered seven manuscripts in their entirety, illustrating the contribution of the Islamic civilization to medical sciences. Currently, the documentation of manuscripts on astronomy and time reckoning housed in al-Azhar University Library is in progress.

The program is also exploring the potential of documenting microforms of manuscripts in special collections as well as creating a portal of Islamic scientific manuscripts on the web. Multi-lingual publications and CD-ROMs are some of the products




The documentation of the scientific Islamic Manuscripts

that make such documented treasures available for scientists, researchers and the general public locally and internationally.

## ETERNAL EGYPT ON THE WEB:

In collaboration with the Supreme Council of Antiquities and IBM Corporation, "Eternal Egypt", www.eternalegypt.org, is a premier website to showcase a selection of Egypt's treasures and cultural heritage on the Internet to the global audience using state-of-the-art technologies. The website covers the different eras of the Egyptian civilization: Pharaonic, Greco-Roman, Coptic and Islamic. It comprises of descriptions of events, characters, museums' objects as well as historical sites wrapped in a variety of stories covering attractive topics. The descriptive information is available in three languages; Arabic, English and French, and is supported by an innovative text-to-speech technology to generate the audio narrations by 2D high-resolution images, tours and panoramic views of many sites as well as 3D models of various objects.

The website is linked to web cameras installed at the Giza Plateau, Karnak Temple, Qaitbey Fort, and Islamic Cairo allowing virtual visits of these sites. The rich content of the website was further used to produce the digital guide available to visitors of the Egyptian museum, providing visual, audio and textual




Eternal Egypt site's homepage: www.eternalegypt.org

information on part of the museum collection. It also includes additional information on related objects, characters, places, and events.



## INTERNATIONAL JOINT PROJECTS:

CULTNAT is a partner in several projects funded by the European Commission, namely:

- **Euromed Héritage II "Patrimoines partagés":** A three-year joint project research program, aiming to document and improve knowledge about the architectural and urban heritage of the 19th and 20th century in the Mediterranean basin.

- **Traditional Water Techniques:** Cultural Heritage for Sustainable Future (Shaduf): This three-year research project, aims to develop a bank of information on traditional and indigenous technologies and to draw attention to the rich and versatile water and wastewater-related heritage in the Mediterranean region.

- **Defense Systems in Mediterranean Coasts** (**SID-LIM**): a two-year project, aiming to build a website about coastal defense systems and to restore and reuse an ancient defense-related building in each participating country.

- **Strabon:** A three-year project, aiming to offer the Mediterranean world a coherent group of online multilingual information systems dealing with cultural heritage and tourist activities supported with multimedia.

- **Unimed Cultural Heritage II:** This three-year project, aims to improve cooperation in the field of cultural heritage preservation, restoration and management among the participating countries, by implementing extended cultural heritage databases, a dedicated portal and training courses in relevant fields.

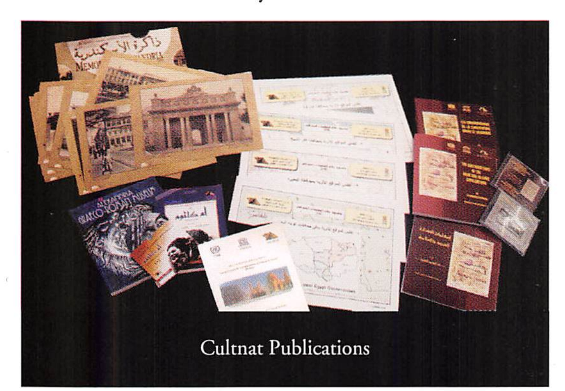
**UNESCO** has been and still is one of the main organizations funding several of CULTNAT activities and projects, such as:

- **Strategic Approach to Egypt's Cultural Heritage:** A study funded by UNESCO and UNDP to analyze the present situation of Egypt's cultural heritage and suggest a strategic approach to this wealth, covering its documentation and the creation of a National Register and database, site management, conservation and restoration, education and capacity building, cultural and ecotourism, as well as institutional arrangements.

- **The Scientific Islamic Manuscript Heritage:** Initiated in September 2001 with a UNESCO fund, the project is documenting scientific Islamic manuscripts available in various institutions and private collections on the national and regional level.

- **Al-Sirah-Al-Hilaliyya Epic:** In collaboration with the Egyptian Society for Folk Traditions, CULTNAT is documenting Al-Sirah-Al-Hilaliyya Epic, recently declared by UNESCO as a World Masterpiece of oral and intangible heritage.

- **CULTNAT Library:** CULTNAT's digital library is developed with the support of UNESCO to be a model of an e-library.



Cultnat Publications








## THE SHOWS

CULTURAMA has proved to be an excellent tool for delivering information to all age groups: children and adults.

CULTURAMA also enabled us to display information that could have hardly been displayed using regular computer display systems.

There is a wide variety of interactive programs available for displaying at CULTURAMA: Ancient Egyptian History, Tour Modern Egypt, Luxor Virtual Visit, Islamic and Coptic Heritage and many others.

In the Ancient Egyptian history program for instance, we present the timeline of the Pharaonic period starting from 3000 B.C. until the beginning of the Gregorian calendar. All of the well known kings are presented by images placed according to a chronological order. Clicking on any of these images, basic information will be displayed about this specific king. Another click would take us to more information about this king's history and important achievements.

CULTURAMA has proven to be an excellent tool to display different types of content such as immersive panoramic views, timelines, long papyri, and comparison between objects and artifacts.

**CULTURAMA** is a large panoramic surround system. It is based on projection technology where 9 projectors connected to a single workstation display a variety of interesting cultural topics in seamless images on 9 interactive flat screens. Cultural Panorama is an innovative harmonized mix between a wealth of cultural and natural heritage information, very informative and attractive multimedia program using the latest display technology. It was developed by the Egyptian Center for Documentation of Cultural and Natural Heritage (CULTNAT).

### Contemporary Egypt



### Ancient Egyptian History



### Islamic & Coptic Heritage





### Luxor Virtual Visit



### Cairo University

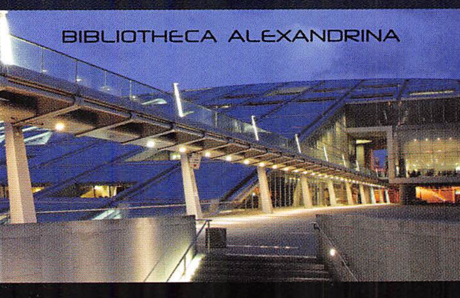


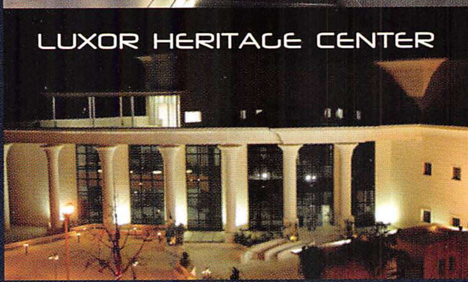
## CULTURAMA in Egypt

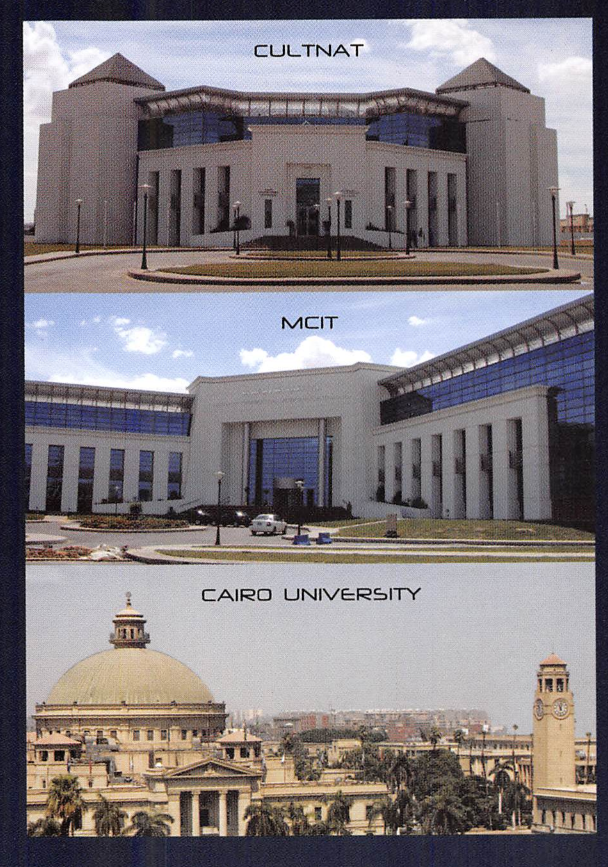
Currently CULTURAMA has five permanent exhibition halls in different locations around Egypt:

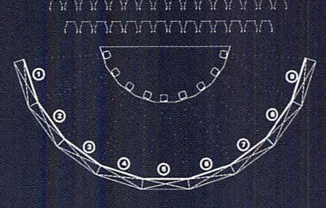
Cairo:
- **CULTNAT, Smart Village**
- **MCIT, Smart Village**
- **Cairo University New Central Library**

Alexandria: **Bibliotheca Alexandrina**
Luxor: **Luxor Heritage Center**



## Portable CULTURAMA

In addition to the different locations around Egypt, the portability of CULTURAMA enabled it to tour the world. CULTNAT experts succeeded in designing a portable CULTURAMA set especially for this purpose.

 Oct. 2004- Frankfurt – International Book Fair

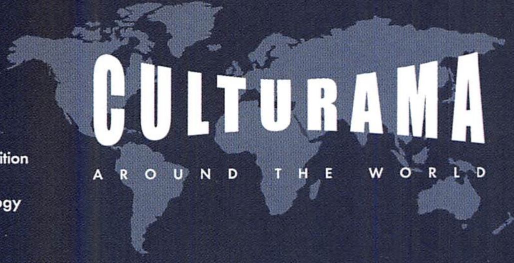
 Feb. 2005- Paris – Institut du Monde Arabe

Nov. 2005- Tunisia – World Summit on Information Society

Dec. 2006- Hong Kong – International Telecommunication Union Exhibition

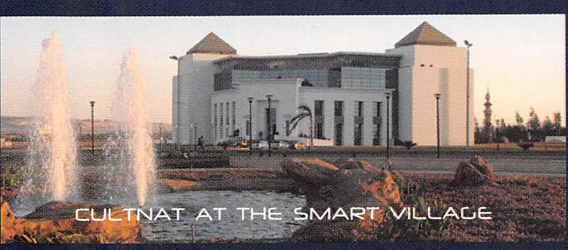
 Feb. 2007- Berlin – German-Egyptian year of Science and Technology

 May. 2008- Geneva – Switzerland - Book Fair





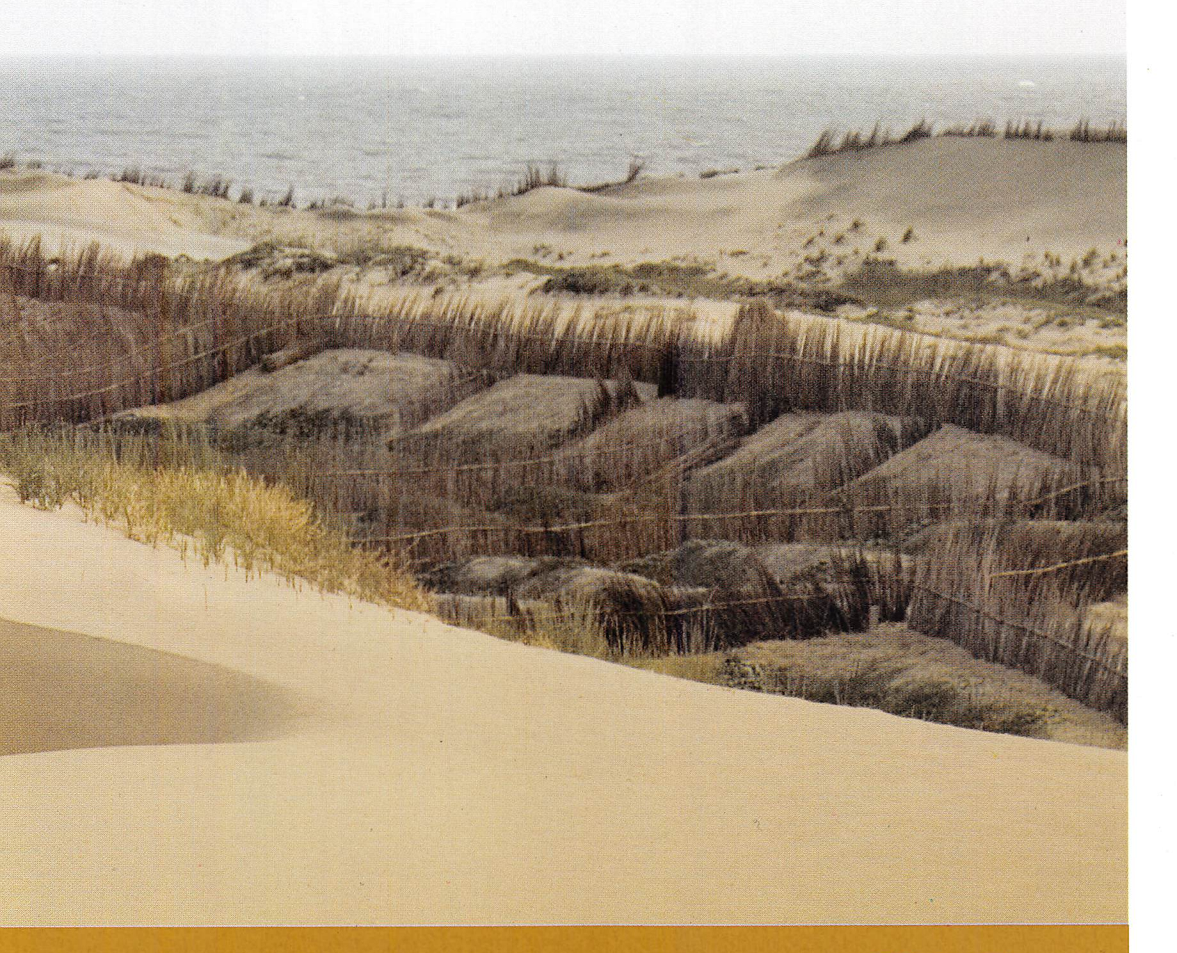





*Photos by: Amr Orensa*

*Written by: Mohamed El Hebeishy*

# Splendid Lake BURULLUS



El Kheshoey Minaret.

EGYPT is a much **diversified country;**
from mountainous **deserts**
to stretches of **goliath sand dunes,**
from green rich **Nile Valley** to all barren **Gilf Kebir,**
and from tourist most wanted **Red Sea** coast
to lost in oblivion Lake Burullus.





Inspired by the beauty of the surroundings, everything is spontaneously done in perfect harmony.



Spur-winged Plover.

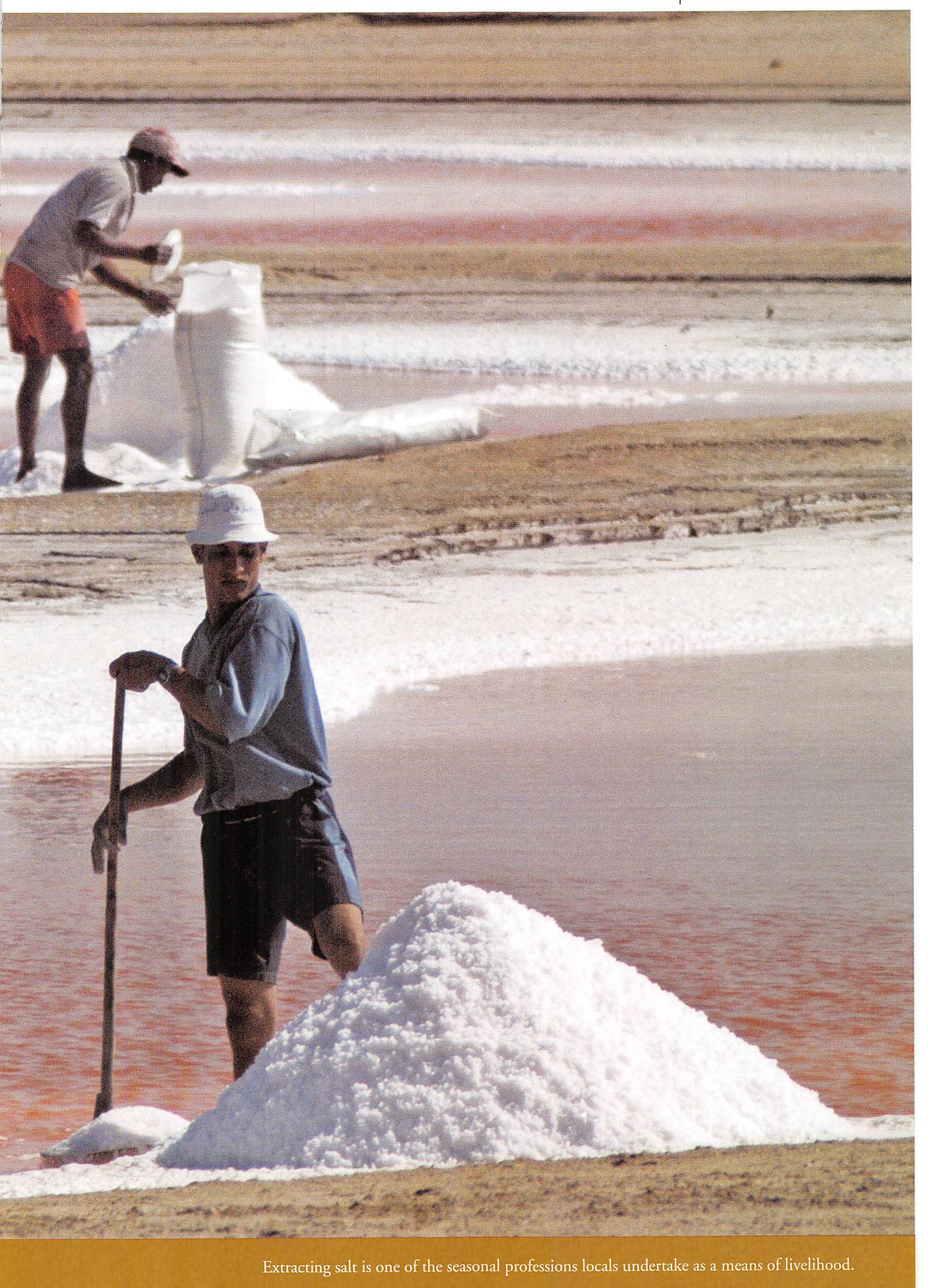
Located midway between the two Nile branches: Rosetta and Damietta, Lake Burullus has concealed itself in the dense green of the Egypt's Lowland. Occupying a 420 Km$^2$, the lake and its surrounding was declared a National Protectorate back in 1998.

Lake Burullus enjoys a diversified wetland ecosystem. The southern part of the lake receives freshwater supply from 6 drains, in addition to one brackish water canal. On the other side, the Boughaz (small outlet to the sea) in the northern part allows saline water to enter the lake. Such a water variation results in a consequent variation in biodiversity. For instance, having both saline and freshwater within the boundaries of the same lake allows the existence of Nile fishes as well as marine ones. Consequently, the north shores of the lake are dominated by salt marshes and mudflats, while the southern shore is bordered by an extensive fringe of reed-swamps.

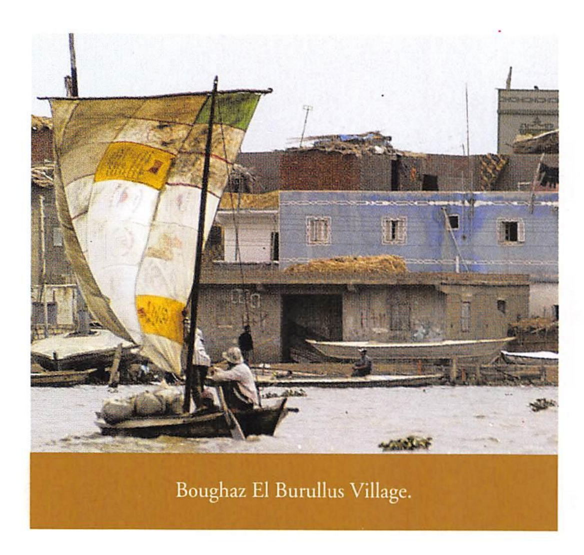
Salt residues draw natural paintings on the lake's edge.

Salt Marshes.





Extracting salt is one of the seasonal professions locals undertake as a means of livelihood.



Boughaz El Burullus Village.

Up north, a strip of dune-covered sandbar acts as a natural barrier marking the border line between the lake and the Mediterranean Sea.

The only passage to the sea is a 50 meter wide outlet, where the largest human settlement is located Boughaz El Burullus village.



Sunrise silhouette as the sand dunes meet the Mediterranean.

From north, dune-covered sandbar acting as a natural barrier marking the border line between the lake and the Mediterranean Sea.

Where dunes meet the sea.





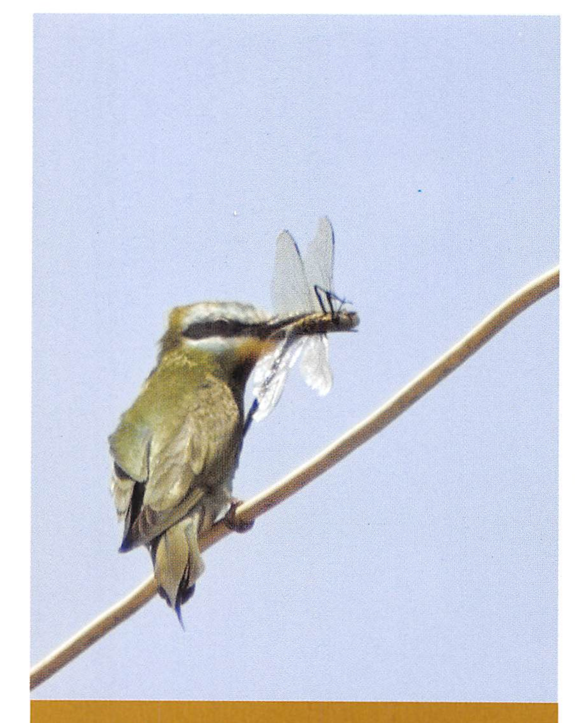
Cattle egret.

The lake and its adjacent marshes possess a national and international importance as a natural breeding habitat for wintering birds. Being the least disturbed wetlands as well as being considered one of the largest lakes in Egypt, ranking second to Lake Nasser, Lake Burullus has been fairly qualified as the most important wetland across the whole country.

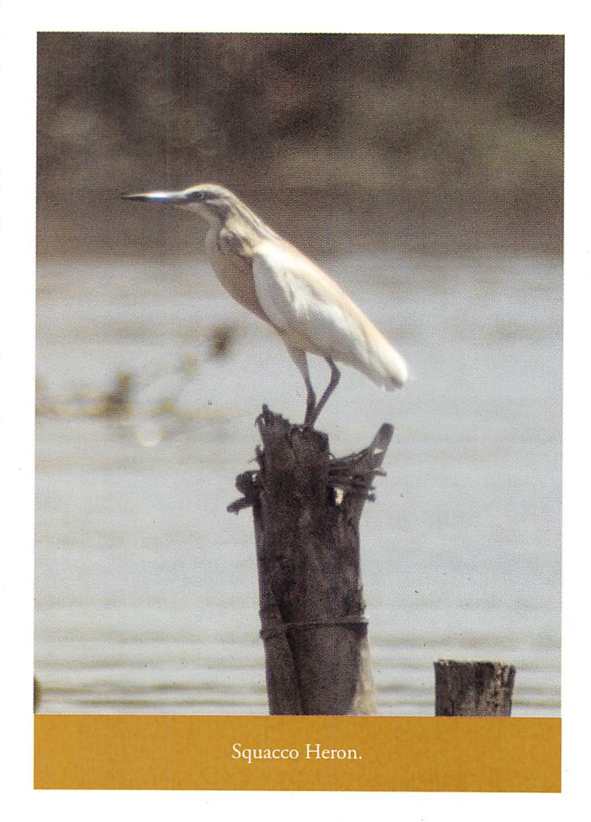
It is an important wintering area for water birds with a array of different species that includes Wigeon (Anus penelope), Marsh Harrier (Cirus aerugnosus) and Coot (Fulica atra). In addition, it is also considered crucially important for Whiskered Tern (Chlidonias hybrida) as it contains the highest worldwide concentration for this Eurasian breeder. Avifauna representation is not restricted to wintering water birds alone; Lake Burullus is the natural habitat to a wide variation of breeding birds as well. Spur-Winged Plover (Hoplopterus spinosus), Kentish Plover (Charadrius alexandrinus), Little Tern (Sterna albifrons) Pied Kingfisher (Ceryle rudis), Blue-cheeked bee eater (Merops persicus) and the rare breeder Squacco Heron (Ardeola ralloides) are all but a carnival of birds that set certainly intrigues any avid bird watcher.

Waterfowl hunting also finds its way to the list along with quail netting. Quail netting is an old activity that goes back to the Old Kingdom as the depictions on Mereruka Tombs in Saqqara indicates.

Around 50 uninhabited islets are found in the lake, with Kom Al Akhder acknowledged as one of the best bird watching sites. As most of the islets are covered with dense vegetation, locals bring their cattle and livestock for grazing. Though pastoral activities are among the local inhabitants list of activities, the top ranks are reserved for fishing and farming.



A blue cheeked Bee eater eating a dragon fly.



Squacco Heron.

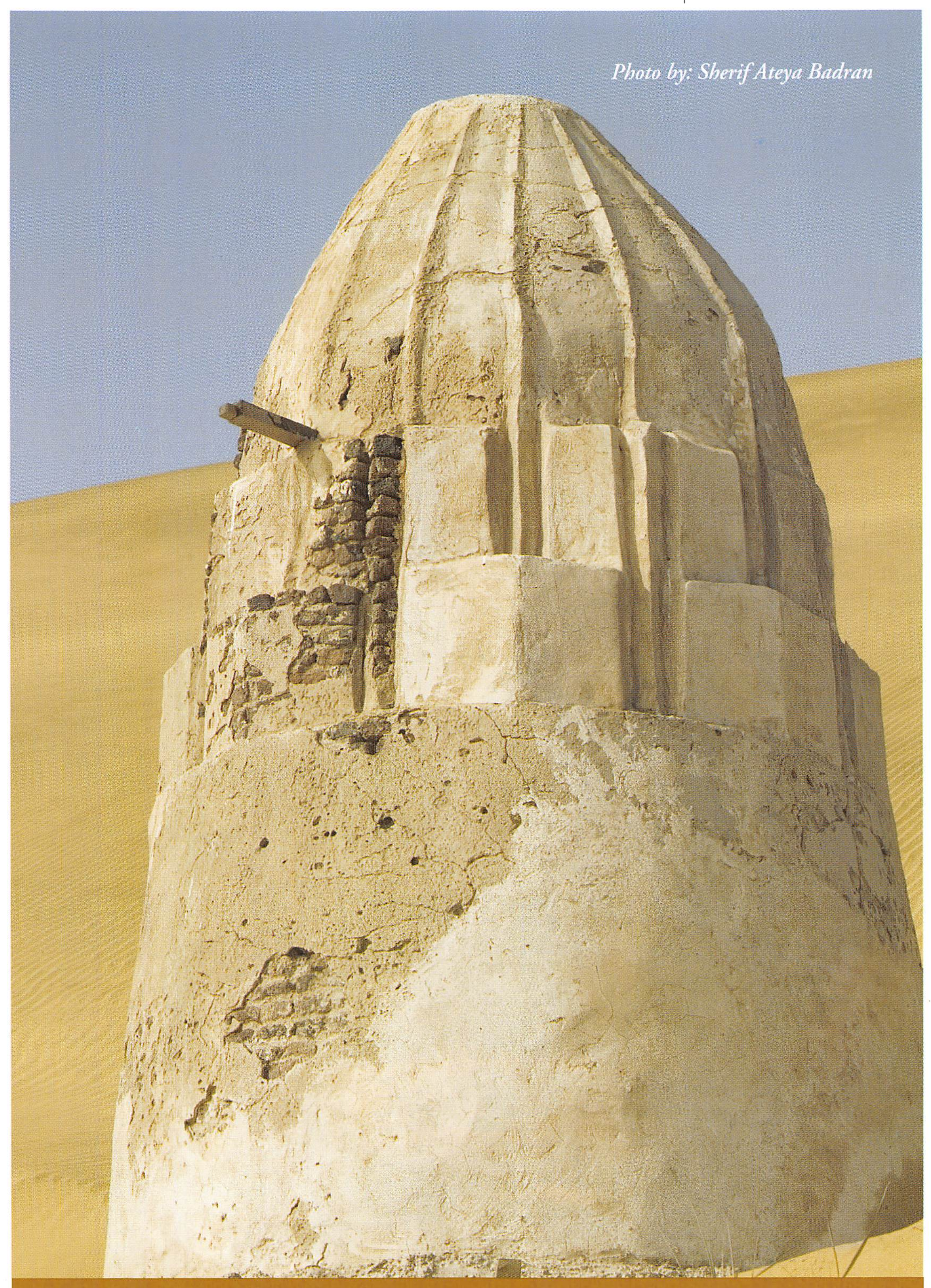
A quail in hide for rest, quails nest on the ground.

Quail catching and netting are widespread professions at Lake Burullus.



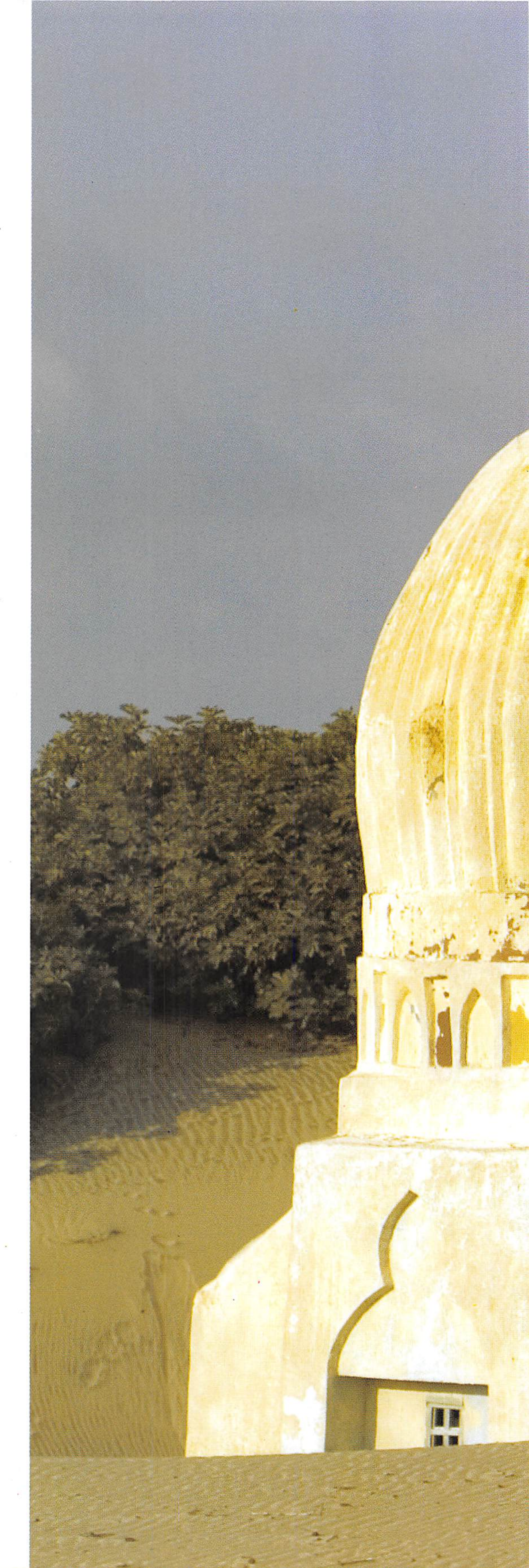
Fishing is the main profession at Lake Burullus.

Locals Fishing.




The tip of El Kheshoey minaret is the only visible part as the rest of the mosque is buried underneath the sand.

The importance of the lake is not constrained to natural heritage, but also archeological importance as well. Located amid the sand dunes to the north of the lake, Sidi Aly Abu Keram Mausoleum is still standing midst the roving sand; it belongs to a holy man from Morocco who locals believe had died in the mausoleum location, while on his way to Mecca for pilgrimage. Another holy man from Morocco is Sidi Mohamed El Kheshoey, this time it is a minaret. In August 1998, the Egyptian archaeological mission working near Baltim stumbled upon the unique Islamic archeological site located between Baltim and Bourg El Burullus, next to El Atarsah village. Dating as back as the ninth century, it is considered to be the first well preserved mosque to be discovered around the Nile Delta area. Though only the tip of the minaret is visible, the rest of the mosque remains buried underneath the sand dune, archeologists believe. In the matter of fact, some even believe that the whole village of Tel El Kheshoey is also buried, underneath the dunes.

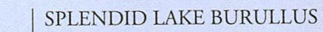




East of El Kheshoey minaret, the Mausoleum is still standing midst the roving sand.



Another site worth visiting is the two island-houses in the southern part of the lake, near Shakhlubah Village. They are two adjacent islands, where on each there is a house that takes more or less the whole of the island's area. In reality, the original purpose of the two houses was not residential at all; actually commercial. Used as a fish market, big boats come sailing from the deep parts of the lake as they can't reach the shore or else they would get stuck in the muddy lake bed. So instead of unloading their load of freshly caught fishes and loading it back again on much smaller boats, they sell their catch directly to fish-traders who manage the transportation to the shore; an innovative idea, to say the least.



One of the twin fish market islands.

Though lost in oblivion, a site that does not exist on the map of common touristic visits, Burullus with its overwhelming splendor that engulfs the heart and revives the senses is a pilgrimage destination to nature lovers, scholars and bird watchers.

*Mohamed El Hebeishy*

This is a quick survey of the major Astronomical events during the three months period that follows the magazine issue date. Both Ancient Egyptians and Arab scientists were grand masters of Astronomy; the oldest and best preserved Astronomical depictions are in Egypt and great inventions were done by Arab Astronomers to master the outer space.

*By Dr. Fathi Saleh*
fsaleh@mcit.gov.eg

# ASTRONOMICA

Before we start surveying the sky, let us get a bit familiar with what is called sky viewing.

- The first fact that we have to know when addressing this subject is that the earth is revolving around its axis which is aligned with the polar star and hence it appears that the sky view rotates, above us around the Polar star as the night hours go by. From one hour to the next, the sky rotates by half a zodiac constellation (there are 12 zodiac constellations and 24 hours per day).

- The second fact is that the good viewing of the sky depends on the degree of pollution, the amount of city lights, the clarity of the sky from clouds and the Altitude of the place.

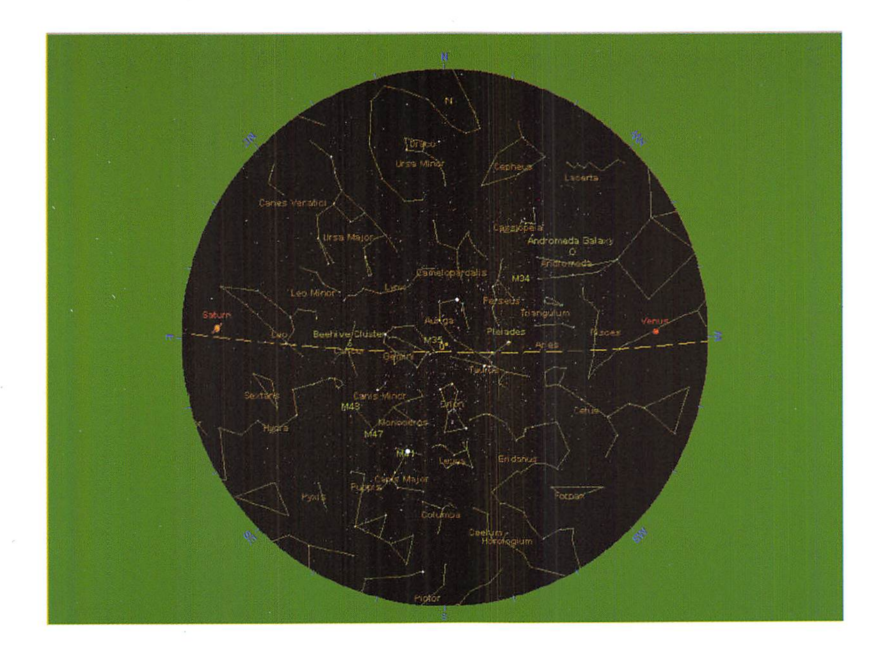
- A third fact is that what we can see with the naked eye is limited to a certain degree of brightness that was given, in the old times, a scale from one to six where one is the magnitude of the brightest star in the sky and six is the magnitude of the faintest. In modern times, we discovered that the star of the first magnitude is one hundred times brighter than that of magnitude six.

With a binocular you can get a better magnification of the sky view and see fainter objects of magnitude eight or nine for example. A typical viewing angle of a binocular is about eight degrees; which corresponds to about one quarter of a sky constellation. A deeper viewing of the sky would necessitate a telescope that would give a better magnification (typical about 100 times) and a narrower angle of viewing (typical 1 degree) which can accommodate a full moon. In the meantime, fainter sky objects can be spotted higher than magnitude six depending on the diameter of the telescope, the bigger the diameter, the fainter the stars it can detect.

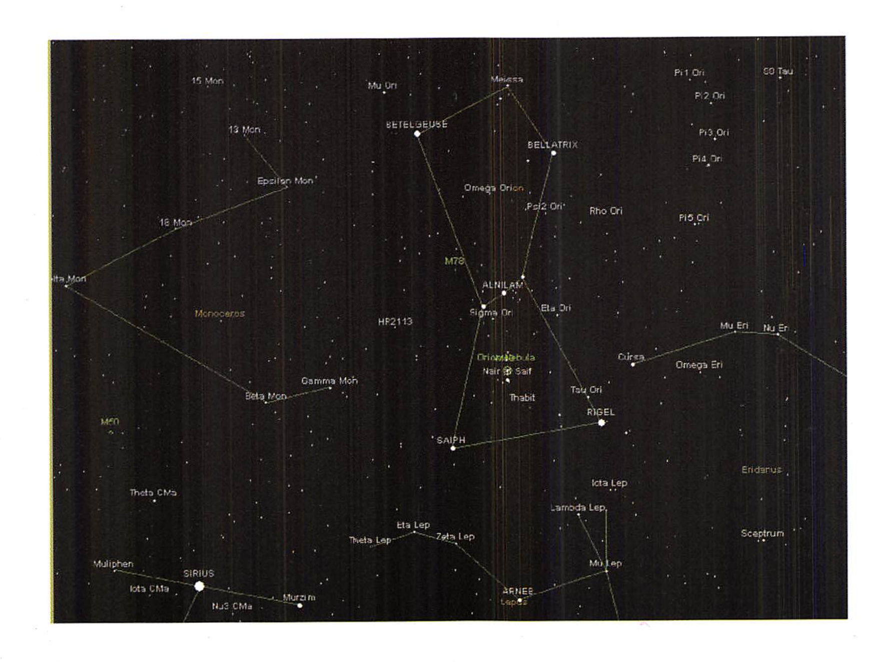
We can conclude that constellations in the sky are better seen with naked eyes and objects such as the moon, planets and comets need binoculars for better viewing. The details and the deep sky objects as galaxies can be well observed by telescopes.
Now we point out the major astronomical view of the sky during the next three months. Let us take as a reference a middle date and a convenient hour for observation. The date chosen is February 15th 2009 and the hour is 8:00 pm (note that for different hours and dates the sky will turn clockwise or anti-clockwise).

At that specific date and hour the dominant zodiac constellation will be Pisces, Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer and Leo. In the middle of the sky and around the polar star one can identify the big dipper (Ursa Major), and Cassiopeia (or the W). As for the planets, the only planets you will be able to see with the naked eye at this time will be Venus, which will be situated at the Pisces constellation, and Saturn that will be residing in the Leo constellation.

An important constellation in the sky is the constellation of Orion which dominates the southern sky with the three middle stars pointing at Sirius the brightest star in the whole sky. Another important constellation is the Andromeda which contains the Andromeda galaxy; the only galaxy that you can watch with a naked eye.




Configuration of the sky on February 15th 2009 at 8:00 pm




Constellation Orion dominating the southern sky with three middle stars pointing at Sirius

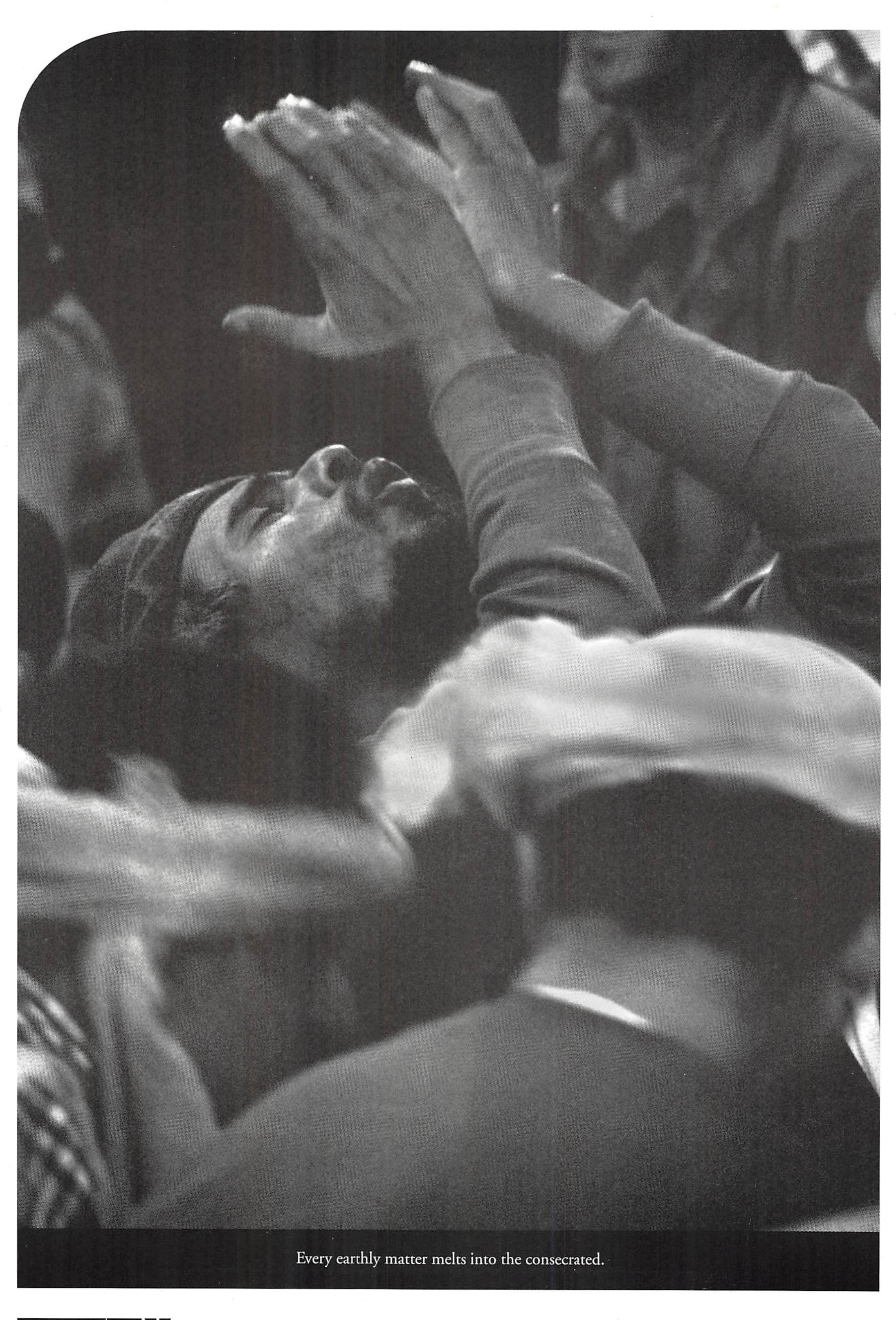
*Photos by: Ayman Khoury*

# THE MULID
## Between the Sacred and the Profane

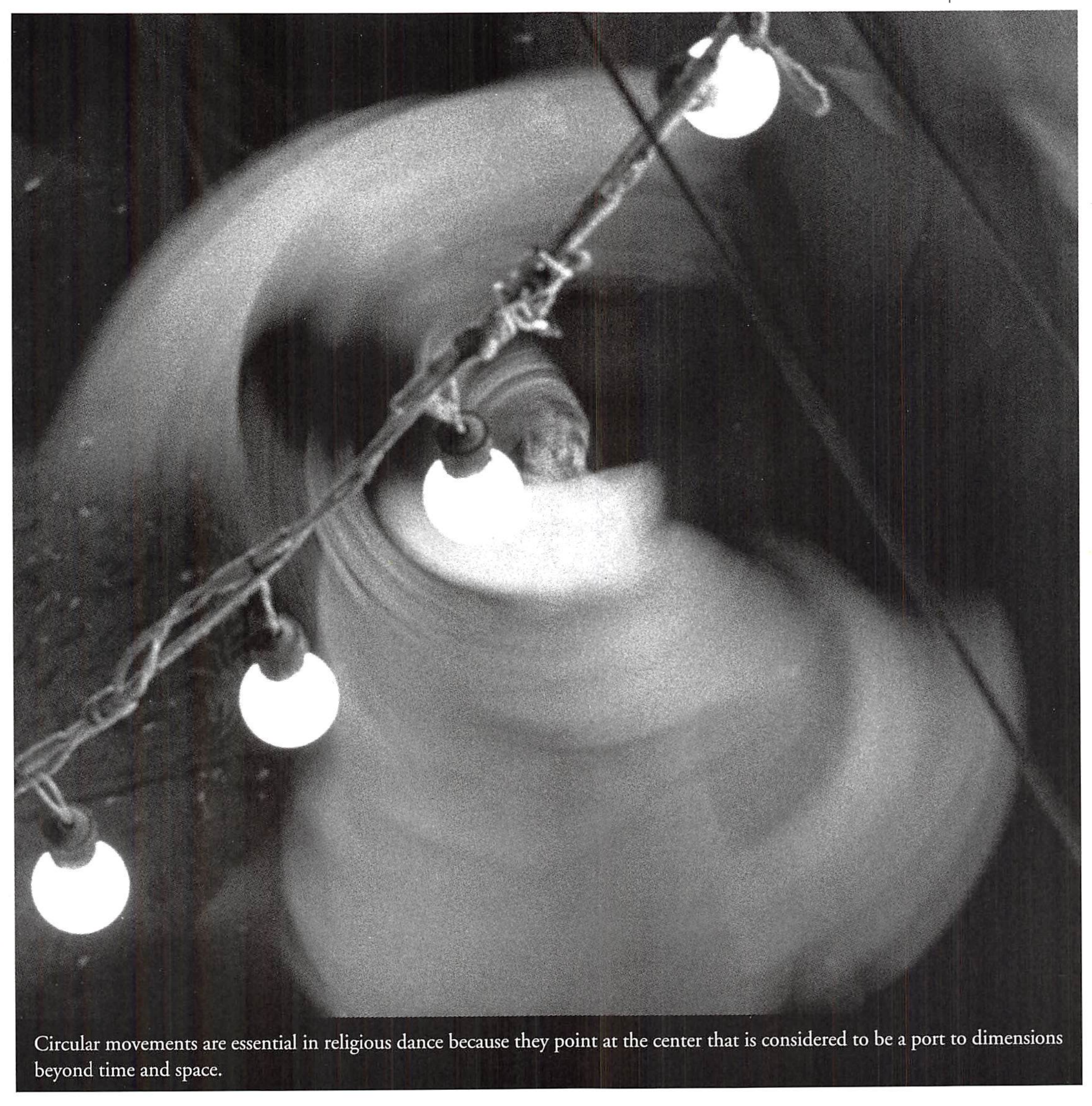
*Written by: Mona Hossny and Ayman Khoury*



The Mulid survived the ages.



Every earthly matter melts into the consecrated.



Circular movements are essential in religious dance because they point at the center that is considered to be a port to dimensions beyond time and space.

**EGYPT** has preserved the tradition of the **Mulid**, celebration of the birthday of a **Muslim Saint**, from the time of the **Fatimids** (A.D. 961-1171) very much alive until today. Hardly a week would pass without having such a **celebration** somewhere, be it in **Upper Egypt** or in one of the older districts in **Cairo**.





Devotees repeat the Divine names continuously for hours as they aspire to attain greater proximity to, and knowledge of, God.

Prophet Mohamed's Mulid (date of birth) is the most celebrated in all Egypt. Toys made of sweets are sold everywhere across the country, candy horses ridden by knights for boys and candy colorfully garlanded dolls for girls. Delicious sweets made of coconut, locum, Nougat, sesame and all sorts of nuts are served in every corner. Mosques are delightfully decorated with lights and flags to host long nights of prayers, Quran recitation and religious chants of praise. Sufi groups like El Shazelia, El Mirghania, El Shafeia, El Ibrahimia and many others gather for a long march festivity carrying their flags and chanting praises, each group ending up in his own Shader (a gathering sheltered place) where devotees start the long night of worship rituals.

One of the most important Mulids is that of Al Hussein, grandson of the Prophet Mohammed which is celebrated every year in the district known as 'Hussein'. People come from all over Egypt to celebrate this Mulid that lasts for two whole weeks. Alms are abundant in every street and every corner of 'Hussein' at this time, food is offered openhandedly to the poor and Followers of various Sufi orders fill the air and the senses with religious chants of praise and devotion.

The Mulid ends on the "Grand Night" during the course of which, devotees tour the streets chanting hymns of praise and inviting passers-by to join the festivities. The shrine of the Saint is then visited to pay tribute, to meditate and to acquire blessings, then the long night commences in which the aroma of incense mixes with sweet scents, Zikr rhythms (the invocation ceremony) blend with enchantment and joy, and every earthly matter melts into the consecrated.

The Zikr in origin is a Sufi ritual in which participants repeat the Divine names continuously for hours as they aspire to attain greater proximity to, and knowledge of, God. Along with the vocal practice, Sufis do a pendular movement to the beat that symbolizes the seeking of the Center of creation behind the opposites. Circular movements are essential in religious dance because they point at this center that is considered to be a doorway to dimensions beyond time and space. Sufis believe that man was created to consciously experience and develop a connection with God and to manifest the power of His Will. Thus, everything they do in life should be in harmony with God's Will.

A numerous number of saints are buried in Egypt of whom the most famous is the grand daughter of prophet Mohamed Sayeda Nafisa, Zein el Din el Abedeen, the father of Sufism Abu el Hassan el Shazely, 'the Sultan of Lovers' Ibn el Fared, Sidi El Morsi Abu el Abbass, as well as Coptic saints like St. Anthony and St. Catherine, this is just to name a few. Today's Egyptian Mulids are an exact mirror of ancient customs. People gather to dance to oriental music, and Sufi admirers choose to chant love poems that make them vibrate with adoration as means of praising God, his prophet, and the saints.

Despite harsh criticism of these traditions by the orthodox, the Mulid has survived the ages. This is perhaps because of the free and harmonious mingling of spiritual joy and earthly delights expressed in the music, dance, and colorful lights that are still warmly exemplified by the Mulid. In Mulids, all the diverse earthly manifestations are the very expression of deep spiritual faith. EE

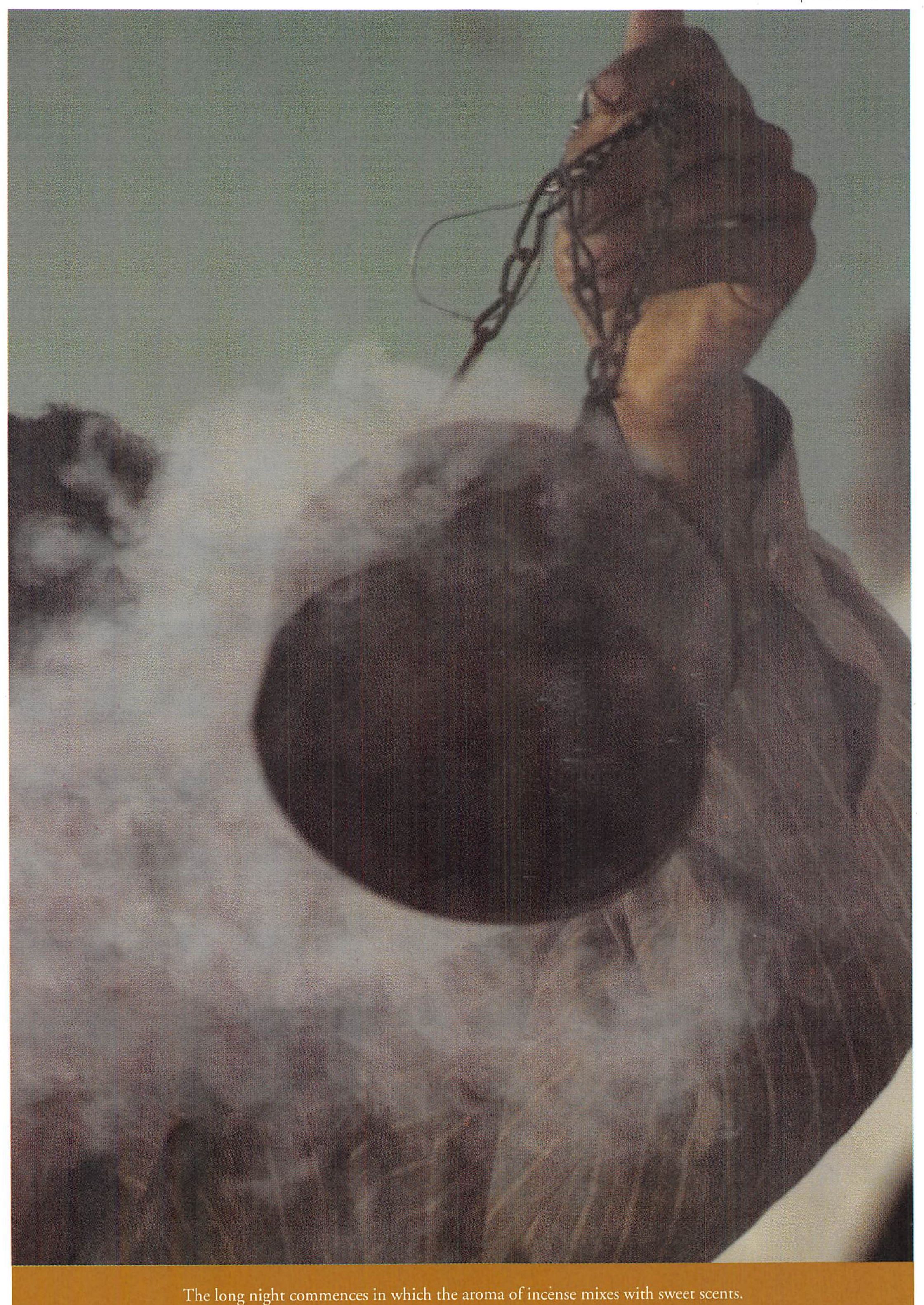




The free and harmonious mingling of spiritual joy and earthly delights expressed in the music, dance, and colorful lights is still warmly exemplified by the Mulid

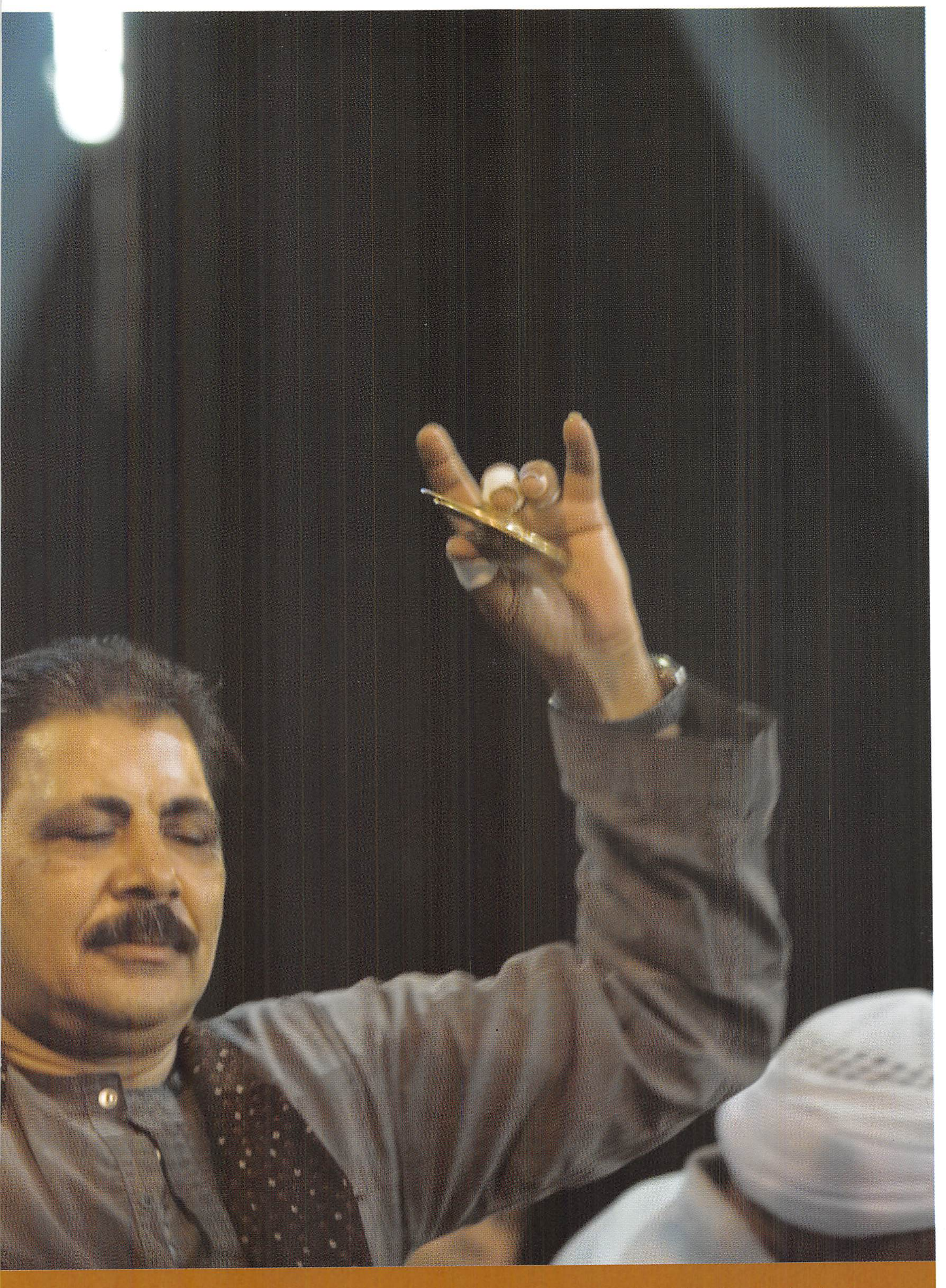


Sufi admirers choose to chant love poems that make them vibrate with adoration as means of praising God.

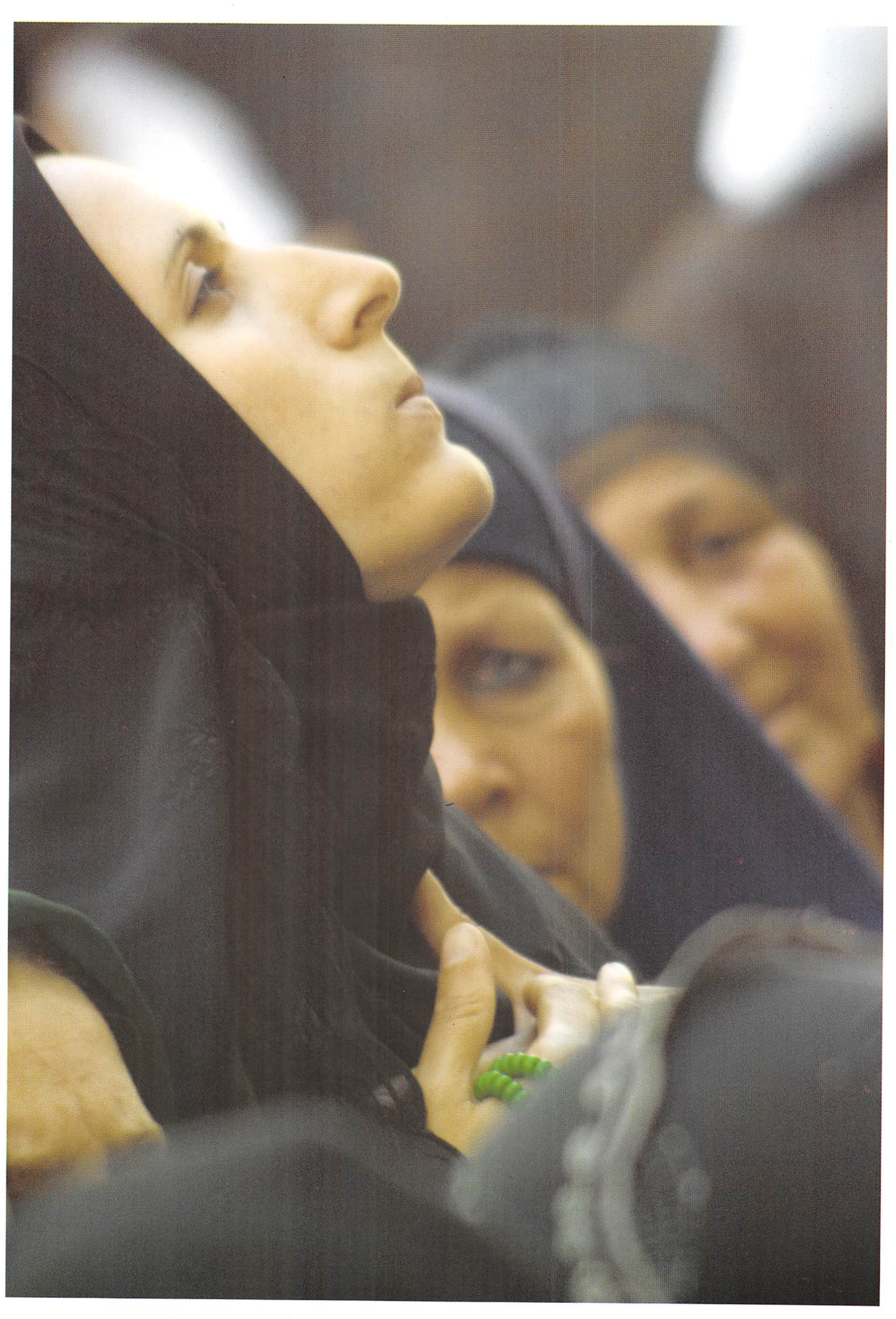


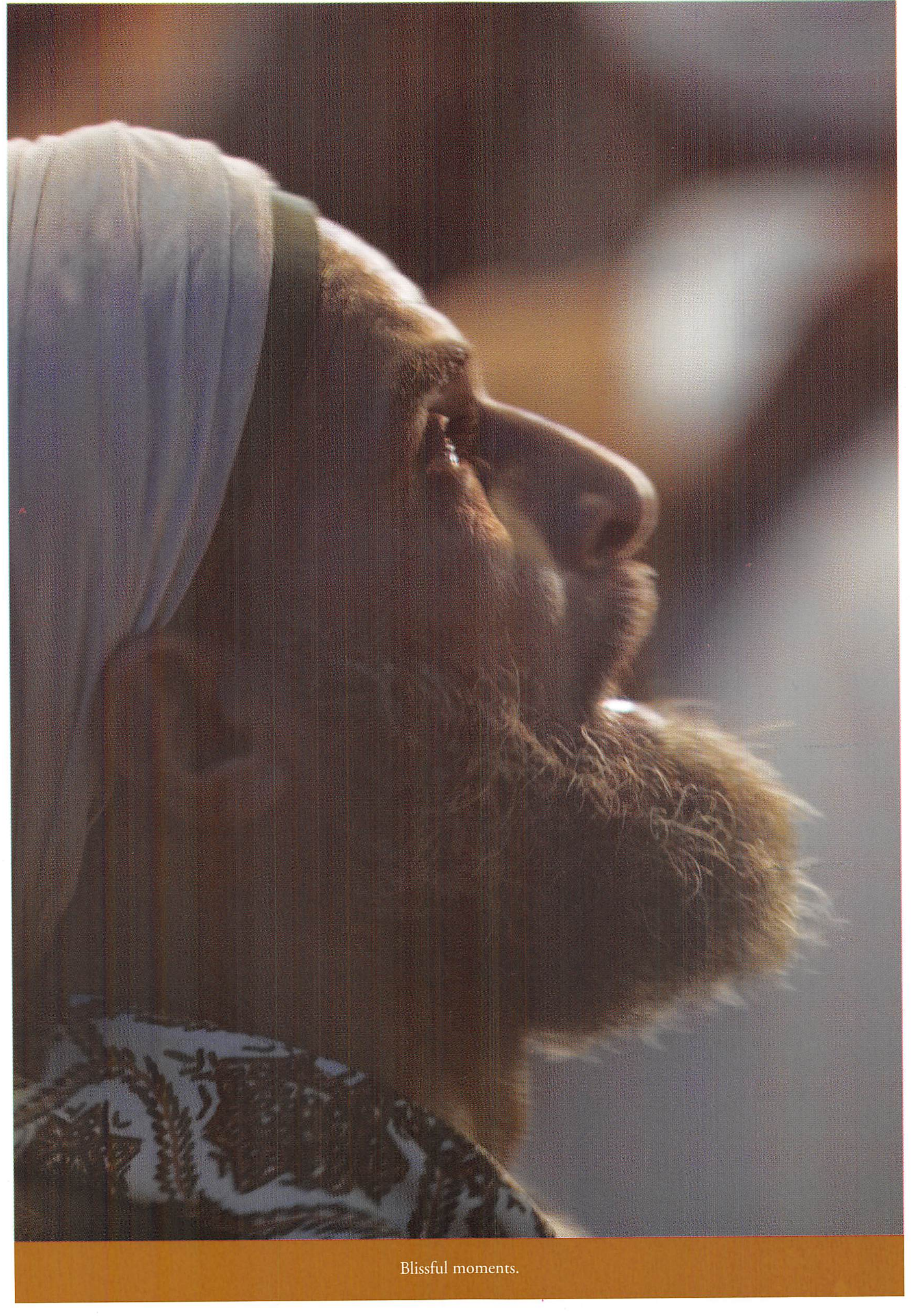
The long night commences in which the aroma of incense mixes with sweet scents.



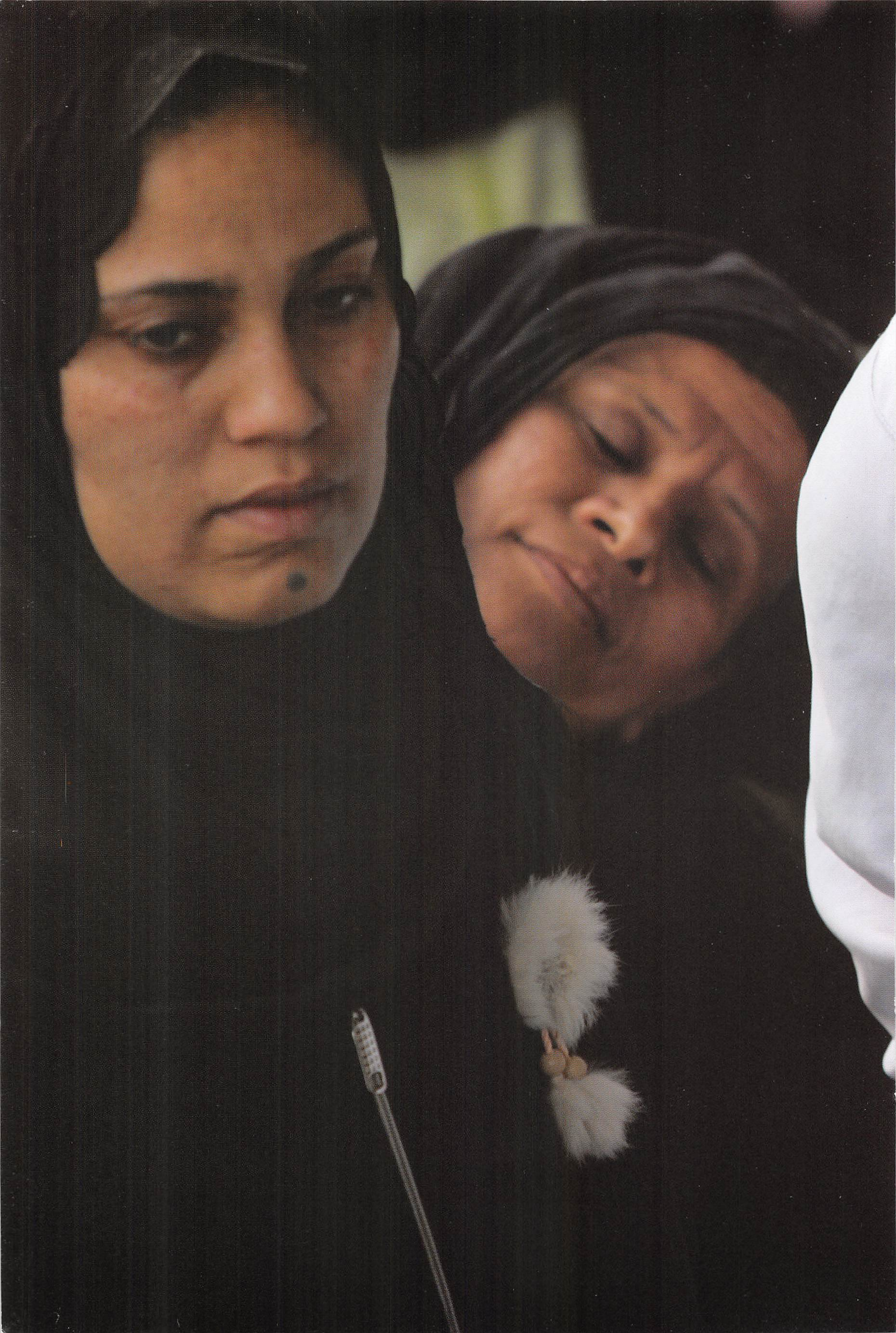


The 'Sagat' is a typical musical instrument used at Mulids accompanying the singers



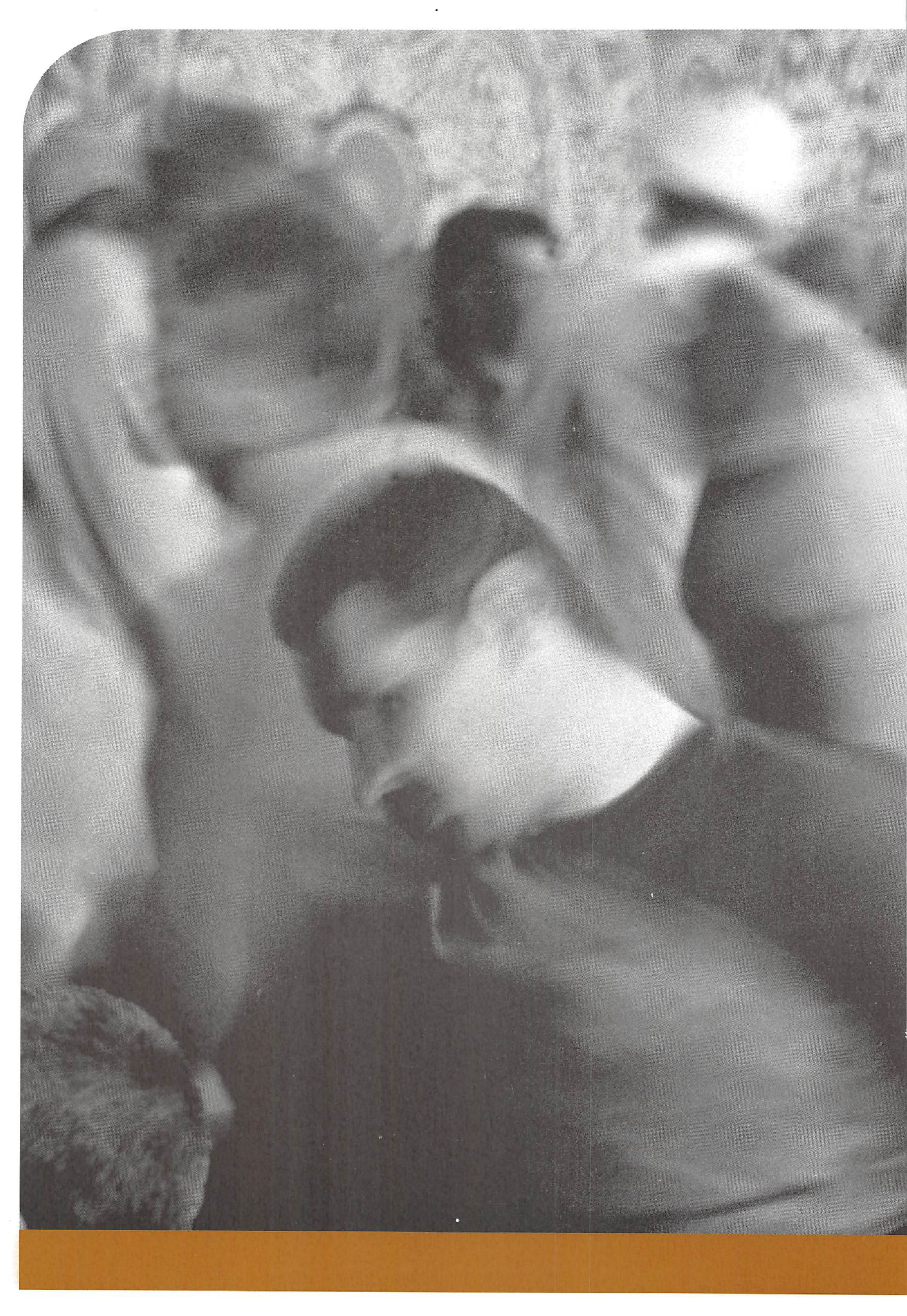


Blissful moments.





In Mulids, all the diverse earthly manifestations are the very expression of deep spiritual faith.





Sufis do a pendular movement to the beat that symbolizes the eternal quest of the Center of creation behind the opposites.





And then the Shrine of the Saint is visited to pay tribute, to meditate, and to acquire blessings.

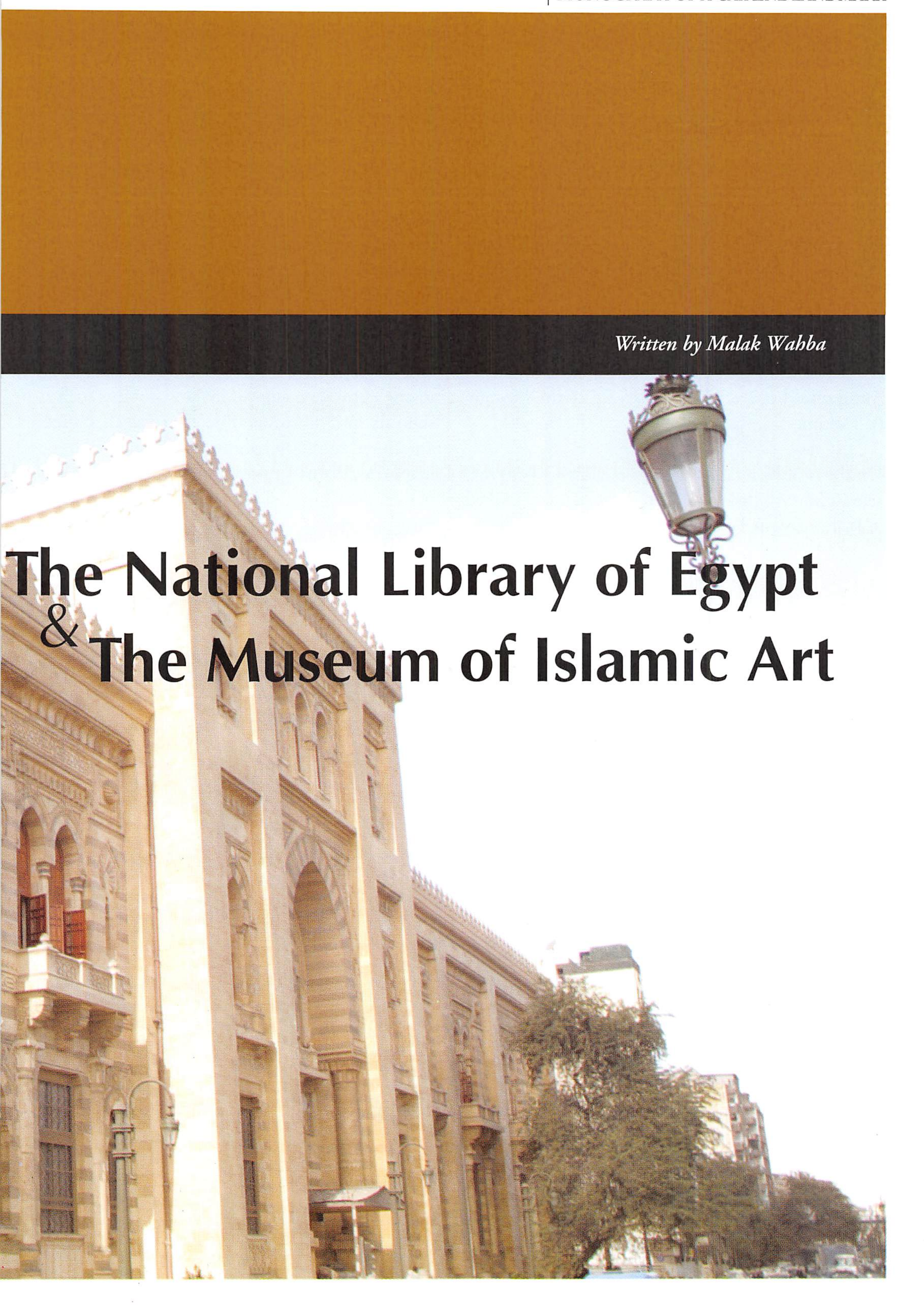


*Photo by: Lehnert & Landrock*

This is a section that focuses on one of Cairo's landmarks; it traces its history, its function and its value to the inhabitants of the capital of Egypt.

# MONOGRAPH OF A CAIRENE LANDMARK

*Written by Malak Wahba*

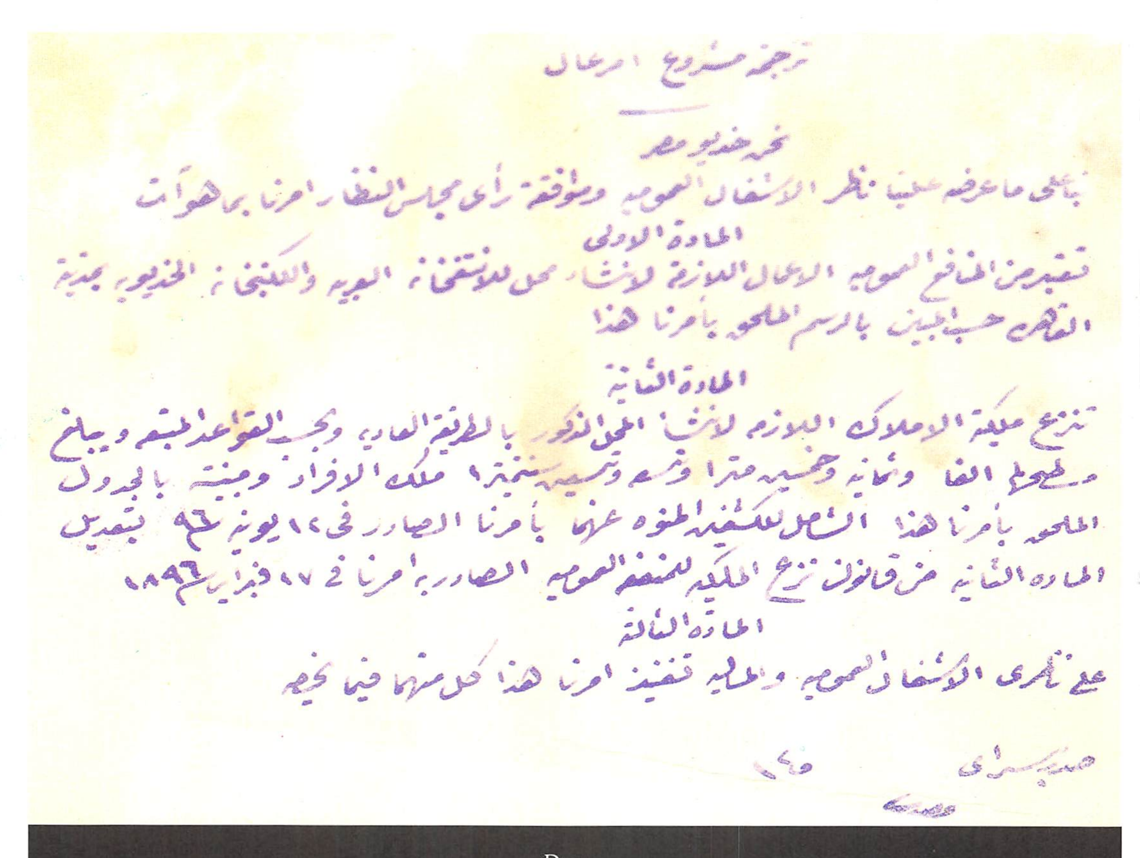


# The National Library of Egypt & The Museum of Islamic Art

This Cairene landmark, listed as a monument since 1982[1] and situated at Ahmed Maher square, formerly known as Bab El-Khalq, is the seat of two great Egyptian institutions. The history of the building goes back to 1903, although the institutions it houses, the Museum of Islamic Art and the National Library of Egypt, go back to 1869 and 1870 respectively.

The story of the Museum of Islamic Art began in 1869, before the establishment of the 'Comité de l'Art Arabe', in order to move the collection of Islamic Antiquities housed in the courtyard of the Mosque Al-Hakim.

On the other hand, the idea to establish a National Library was Ali Pasha Mubarak's, an engineer trained in France and one of the most influential advisors of Khedive Ismaïl, who recommended the establishment of a European style central library; similar to the "Librairie Nationale" he had seen in Paris. Indeed, the Khedive was concerned with preserving Egyptian cultural assets from theft and traffic, since a large portion of manuscripts and papyri were continuously being smuggled out of the country. Therefore, on March 23rd 1870, he issued a decree to establish "The Khedival Library", the first national library in the Middle East. These assets, endowed by sultans, princes and scholars, were dispersed in numerous mosques, mausoleums, and educational institutions such as in schools and kuttabs. The first batch collected amounted to 30.000 volumes, reference books and maps (in manuscript form) and constituted the core of the Library, in addition to a number of geometrical instruments.



ترجمة مشروع امر عالي

نحن خديو مصر

بناء على ما عرضه علينا ناظر الاشغال العمومية وموافقة رأي مجلس النظار امرنا بما هو آت

المادة الاولى

تعتبر من المنافع العمومية الاعمال اللازمة لانشاء محل للانتيقخانة العربية والكتبخانة الخديوية بجهة الخلق حسبما مبين بالرسم الملحق بامرنا هذا

المادة الثانية

تنزع ملكية الاملاك اللازمة لانشاء المحل المذكور بالطريقة العادية وبحسب القواعد المتبعة ويبلغ مسطحها الفا وثمانية وخمسون مترا وثلاثة وتسعين سنتيمترا من ملك الافراد ومبينة بالجدول الملحق بامرنا هذا الشامل للكشف المنوه عنها بامرنا الصادر في ١٧ يونيه سنة ... بتعديل المادة الثانية من قانون نزع الملكية للمنفعة العمومية الصادر به امرنا في ٢٧ فبراير سنة ١٨٩٦

المادة الثالثة

على ناظري الاشغال العمومية والمالية تنفيذ امرنا هذا كل منهما فيما يخصه

Decree.

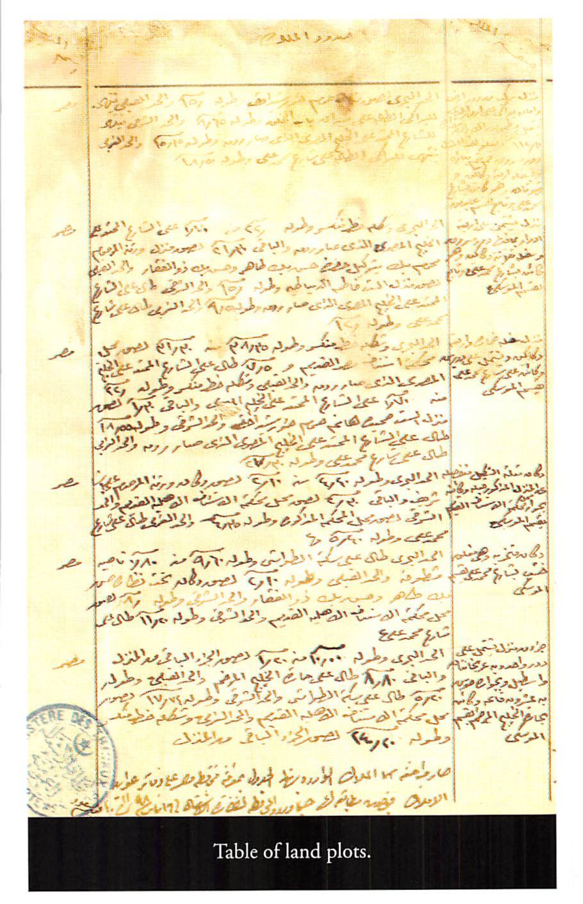
The chosen place for the Library was situated in Darb El-Gamamiz, precisely the former residence of Mustafa Fadil Pasha, the Khedive's half-brother who fled to Paris when his scheme to be the successor for the throne failed[2]. The Khedive endowed ten thousand feddans to cover all expenses necessary for the good running of the Library. The official opening took place almost six months later, on September 24th, 1870 and it was decreed that the Library would function under the auspices of both ministries, the Awqaf and the Education.

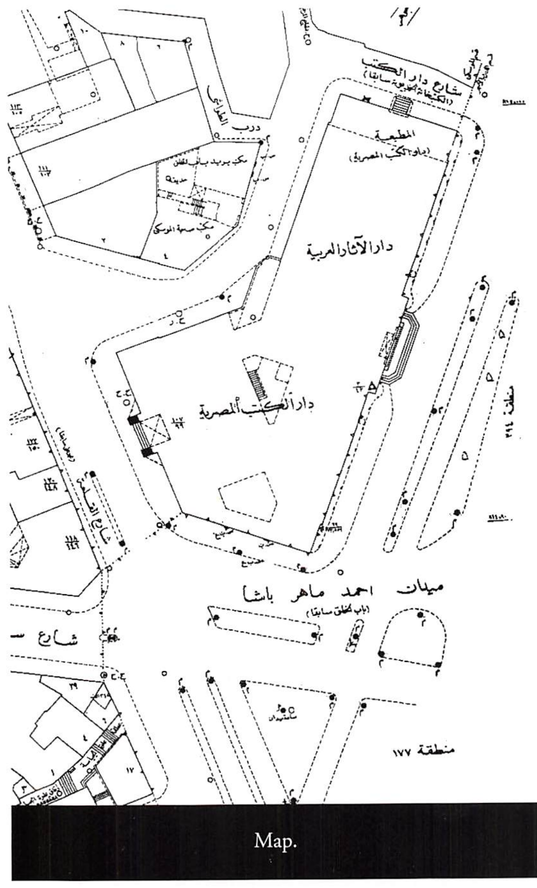
In 1889, Khedive Tewfik endowed additional property, 1806 feddans, to assist the Library in difficult times and specified an annual allowance of 500 Egyptian Pounds.

Not before long, it became obvious that the Palace of Mustafa Fadil Pasha was not sufficient to house the ever growing collection. A new place had to be acquired and consequently a plot situated in a prime location on Bab El-Khalq square was allocated to the new construction by orders of the Khedive Abbas Hilmy II.

A project to redevelop the area was carefully thought of and on December 29th, 1897 it was presented for ministerial approval. On January 19th, 1898, Khedive Abbas Hilmy II issued a decree to expropriate five adjacent land plots as suggested by the Ministry of Public Works in order to have a roundabout and ensure the façade alignment.

*1- By decree of the Prime Minister, no. 273 of the year 1982.*
*2- Mitchell, T. "Colonizing Egypt". Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991. pp. 64-65.*


Table of land plots.



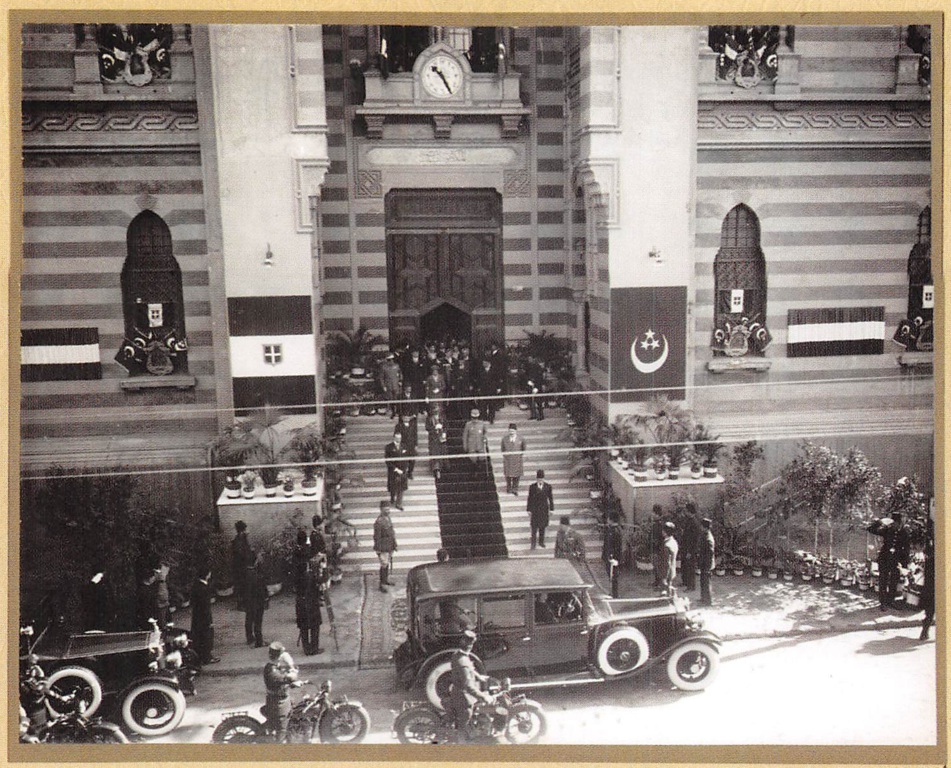
Map.

زيارة

حضرة صاحبي الجلالة ملك ايطاليا وملكتها وكريمتها الدار الكتب المصرية بصحبة المرحوم الملك فؤاد الأول

في يوم الثلاثاء ٢٦ شوال سنة ١٣٥١ هجرية (٢١ فبراير سنة ١٩٣٣ ميلادية)

وقد استغرقت الزيارة خمسا وخمسين دقيقة وقد غادروا جميعا الدار في الساعة العاشرة والدقيقة الخامسة والعشرين كما يستدل على ذلك من ساعة دار الكتب المصرية في هذه الصورة



*Souvenir à la Bibliothèque Egyptienne*
*de la part de Haig Pakhtchanian*

Haig Pakhtchanian

King of Italy.

By 1899, the Italian architect Alfonso Manescalo[3] had finished his design project for the new seat of the National Library and the Museum of Islamic Art in a neo-Mamluk style. The Khedive himself initiated the construction works immediately and it took four years to complete it. The new building was open to the public in 1904; the Museum occupied the ground floor while the upper floors were allocated to the Library, whose collection had reached 54.000 volumes (books and manuscripts).

During the following years, the Library and the Museum were one of Cairo's landmarks, not to be missed by visitors to Egypt. Royalties, important

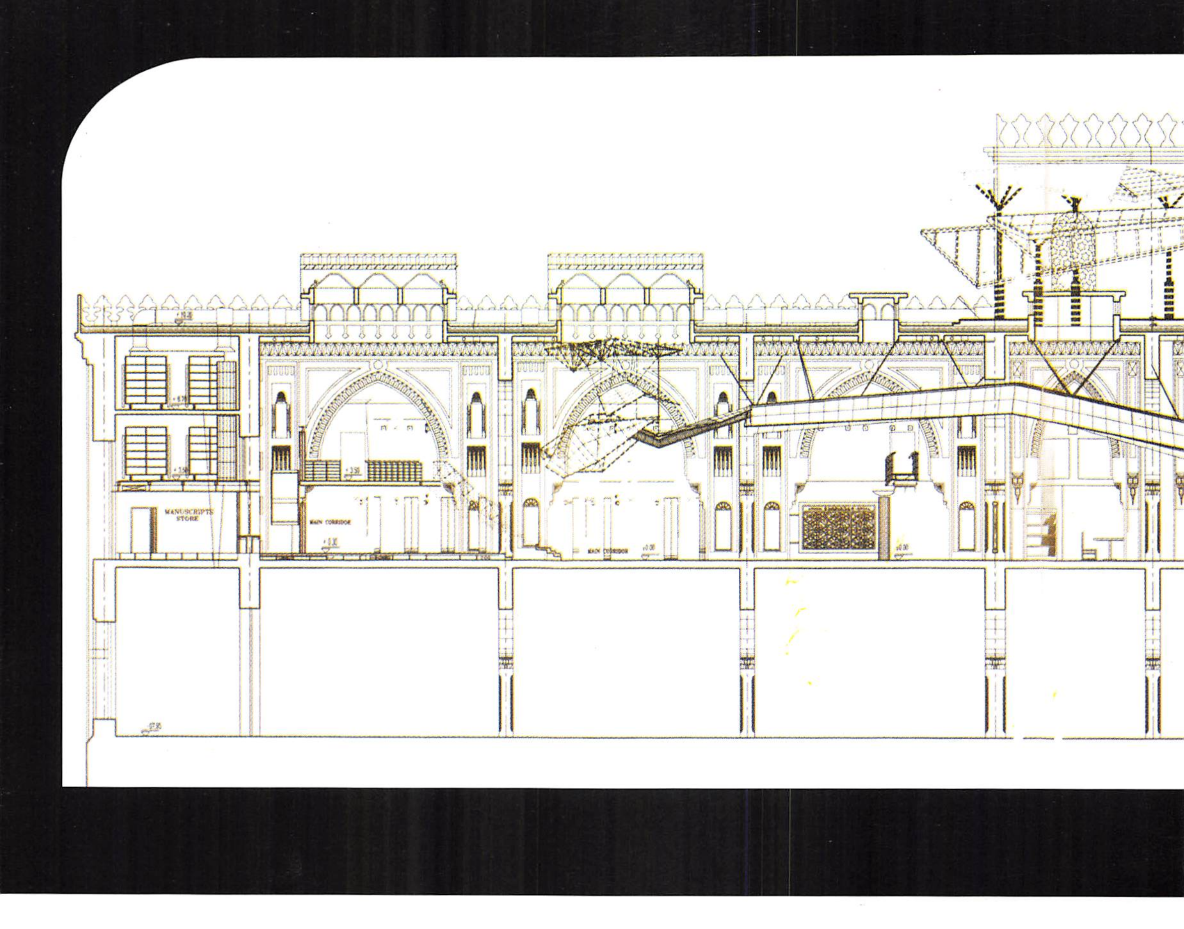
*3-In some documents and texts, he is cited as Maniscalo. Born in Naples in 1853, Manescalo moved to Egypt with his family in 1862. At age 15, he was sent to study at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris where he worked at the atelier of Julien Guadet (1873-1877) following which he took a professional training in Naples. Upon his return to Cairo in 1883, he completed a course of architecture at the Polytechnic School of Cairo. Then he was hired at the Ministry of Public Works where he became the Chief Architect in 1902.*


Young King Farouk

figures and official guests of the government were escorted to that place. The collections housed in both institutions were of uncontested value and importance.

Despite the fact that the Museum continued to operate from there, the building's condition began to gradually deteriorate. The administration of the Library moved to another location overlooking the Nile in Ramlet Boulaq in 1973 and the books were relocated in stages between 1971 and 1977, the year of its inauguration.

In 1993, the international architectural competition for the renovation and upgrade of the seat of the National Library of Egypt was launched by the Cultural Development Fund of the Ministry of Culture, under the auspices of the First Lady of Egypt. The project presented by Architects Ahmed Mito and Magdy Qassem was highly approved for its innovative approach towards preservation and upgrading. In 1999, construction companies were invited to present a bid and the offer presented by Orascom (with an American partner) worth more




than 55 million EGP was the one selected from among many.

Since the building is listed as a monument, the approval of the Supreme Council of Antiquities was secured prior to the implementation. In 2000, the construction company took over the building, except for spaces belonging to the Museum such as the exhibition halls and garden, the basement and the Hall of Antique Rugs and Carpets. The entire external façade of the building was renovated, but only the interior of the Library was upgraded and the whole project was completed in the beginning of 2007.

In March of the same year, President Mubarak inaugurated the renovation and upgrade of the seat of the National Library in a ceremony attended by highly distinguished guests.

Today, the renovated seat of the Library features a "Center for Eastern studies" and a "Museum for the History of Books and Arabic Calligraphy". It houses an exceptional collection of manuscripts, rare examples of Arabic papyri, Islamic coins and Arabic Calligraphy and selected antique maps, all beautifully displayed and documented. It provides the most up-to-date facilities and services for researchers and readers.

Today, the Museum that holds 10,200 artifacts is currently being upgraded and refurbished, in a manner that would certainly promote it as one of the best museums of Islamic Art in the world; its unique collection of rare woodwork, plaster, metal, ceramic, glass, crystal, and textiles, is diverse both in terms of their provenance and in terms of the periods to which they belong.

*Malak Wahba*

Section.



Logo of Kutubkhana.



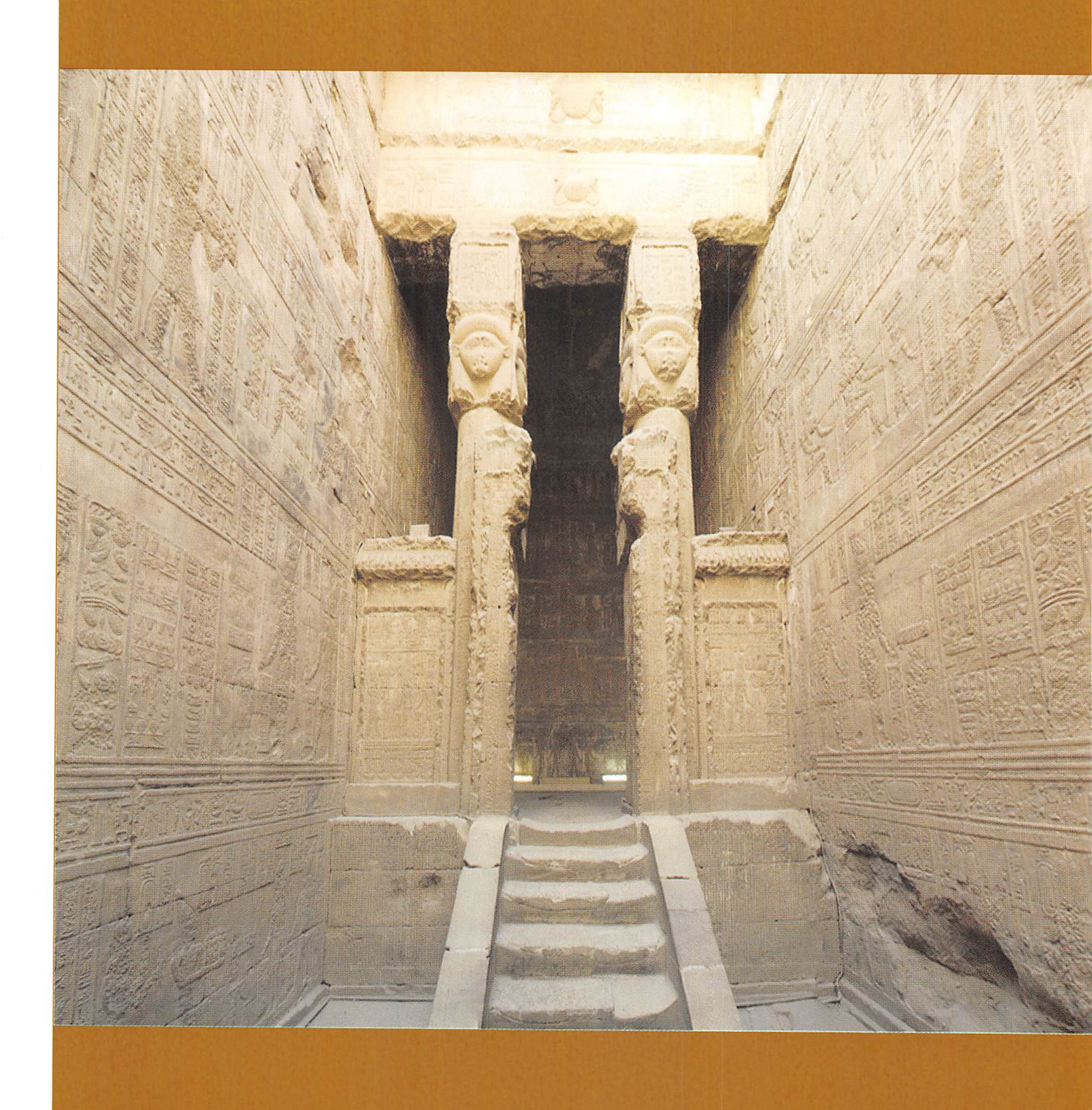

Letterhead of Kutubkhana.

**The National Library of Egypt and The Museum of Islamic Art**

Address: Bab El-Khalq square, Cairo
Opening hours: 9:00 am – 5:00 pm
(everyday of the week)

Now closed for renovations
and expected to open in August 2008
Tel: 23901520-23909930

*Photos by Ayman Khoury*



*Written by Dr. Mohamed Saleh*

# The RECKONING of Time In Ancient EGYPT

The Temple of Hathur in Dendera.

In ancient Egypt, religion played an important role in developing science, technology and the arts. The beliefs in gods and the afterlife were related always to the power of nature and its phenomena, such as the sun, the moon, the stars, the earth, the sky and the inundation.

The clear starlit sky helped astronomers to make exact observations and developed their knowledge of the stars. It helped architects to place their buildings (temples and pyramids) to agree with the cardinal points, which they fixed, precisely by first identifying the northern circumpolar star.

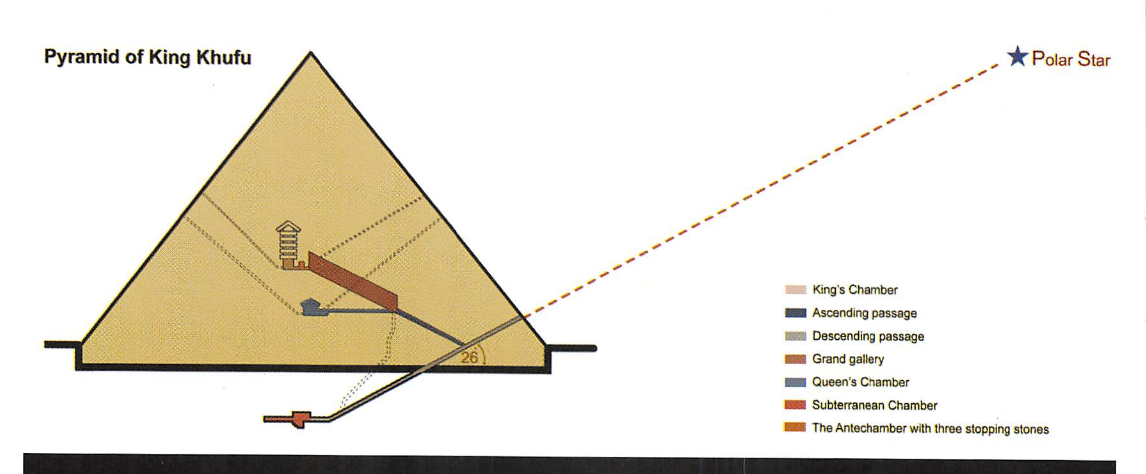
The positions of the stars in the sky were also recorded during each of the twelve nightly hours, and throughout the year in periods of 10 days (there were 36 of these "decans" in one year).

Astronomical lists or maps were first recorded in some early Middle Kingdom (ca. 1900 B.C.) and Late Period (ca. 600 B.C.) coffins. They were also depicted on temple ceilings (the Osirion and temple of Seti I at Abydos, the Ramesseum and Madinat Habu at Thebes) as well as on the ceilings of some royal tombs at the Valley of the Kings (Seti I, Ramesses IV, Ramesses VI, Ramesses VII, and Ramesses IX). The ceiling of the tomb of the famous architect Sennenmut at Deir el-Bahari was also decorated with important astronomical scenes. These depictions and texts were thought to have helped the priests in knowing the time of the feast days and various ceremonies. In the hereafter, the deceased needed to know the map of the sky in order to find his way there.

Five planets have been recognized by Egyptian astronomers since the Middle Kingdom; they were depicted as figures of deities: Jupiter, Mars, Mercury, Saturn and Venus.

**The ancient Egyptian year was divided into three seasons, of four months each:**

**The first season was called Akhet and was the inundation season.** The months were: Djehwty (Tut)




The alignment of the Pyramid of King Khufu with the Polar Star.

from August 29; Ba en Ibat (Babe) from September 29; Hwt-hr (Hathor) from October 28, and Ka-her-ka (Kiak) from November 27.

**The second was called Peret, the "coming forth of the seeds" (cultivation) season.** The months were: Ta-ibt (Tuba) from December 27; Pa-en-mechr (Amshir) from January 26; Pa-en imnhotbu (Peremhat) from February 25, and Pa-en-renenutet (Paramuda) from March 27.

**The third season was called Shemu, or Summer.** The months were: Pa-en-khons (Pashons) from April 26; Pa-en-Inet (Peunet) from May 26; Ebib (Abib) from June 25, and Mesut-re (Mesre) from July 25.

Egyptians also divided the day into 12 hours and the night into 12 hours. This division was observed when they described the nightly journey of the sun through the sky of the underworld. The hours were drawn as regions crossed by the solar boat, which carried the sun-god and his retinue.

Astronomers (priests) had to reckon the time at night by watching the places of stars, when they appeared and when they disappeared. They had to know when to begin the services of prayer and when to celebrate the feasts.

The water clock (clepsydra) was invented by the astronomer Amenemhat in the reign of King



Astronomical depictions on the ceiling of Hathur temple in Dendera.





The Ceiling at the Tomb of Seti I in Luxor.

Amenhotep I (1530 B.C.). One complete, surviving water clock that was made during the time of Amenhotep III (1380 B.C.) is now in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo.

It is in the form of a large pot of indurate limestone. The clepsydra functions when it is filled with water, which pours out through a hole at the bottom.

To discover the time, the water level inside the pot can be seen at the nearest of the vertical dots (corresponding to the twelve hours) on the inner surface. These dots vary in level according to the seasons and months of the year. By this ingenious method, priests could find out the time during the night to hold their prayers and ceremonies.



The Pharaonic Water Clock 'Clepsydra'.

Priests could also watch the stars and make astronomical calculations for the dates of the feasts. During the day, the time was reckoned by watching a sundial. An example of this sundial is displayed at the Egyptian museum. During the night, time was reckoned by watching the stars. When there were clouds, they used the water clock. The statement on the Clepsydra says: "In order to know the hours of the day when we cannot see the God Ra' (the sun) and to know the hours of the night when the stars are invisible".

The 12 Zodiac Constellations used by the Babylonians were adopted by the Egyptians in the first century A.D., and were "Egyptianized." They were depicted on the ceiling of the Osiris chapel on the roof of the



Here we can see the Dots inside the Water Clock.





The Sundial at the Egyptian museum.

temple of Dendera in Upper Egypt, this zodiac is now in the Louvre museum in Paris.

Chronology depended upon astronomy. From the Fifth Dynasty (2400 B.C.) on, astronomers had observed that the day on which the New Year begins, coincided with the beginning of the inundation and the early rising of the brilliant dog-star (Sirius) in the eastern horizon after it had been invisible for about 70 days. Astronomers counted the period between a real appearance and another one and found it to be 365 days and a quarter.

This period of the astronomical year was more accurate than the simplified-year which consisted of twelve months of 30 days (equal to 360 days) plus five "epagomenal" days. These five days were considered to be feasts for the deities Osiris, Isis, Seth, Nephthys

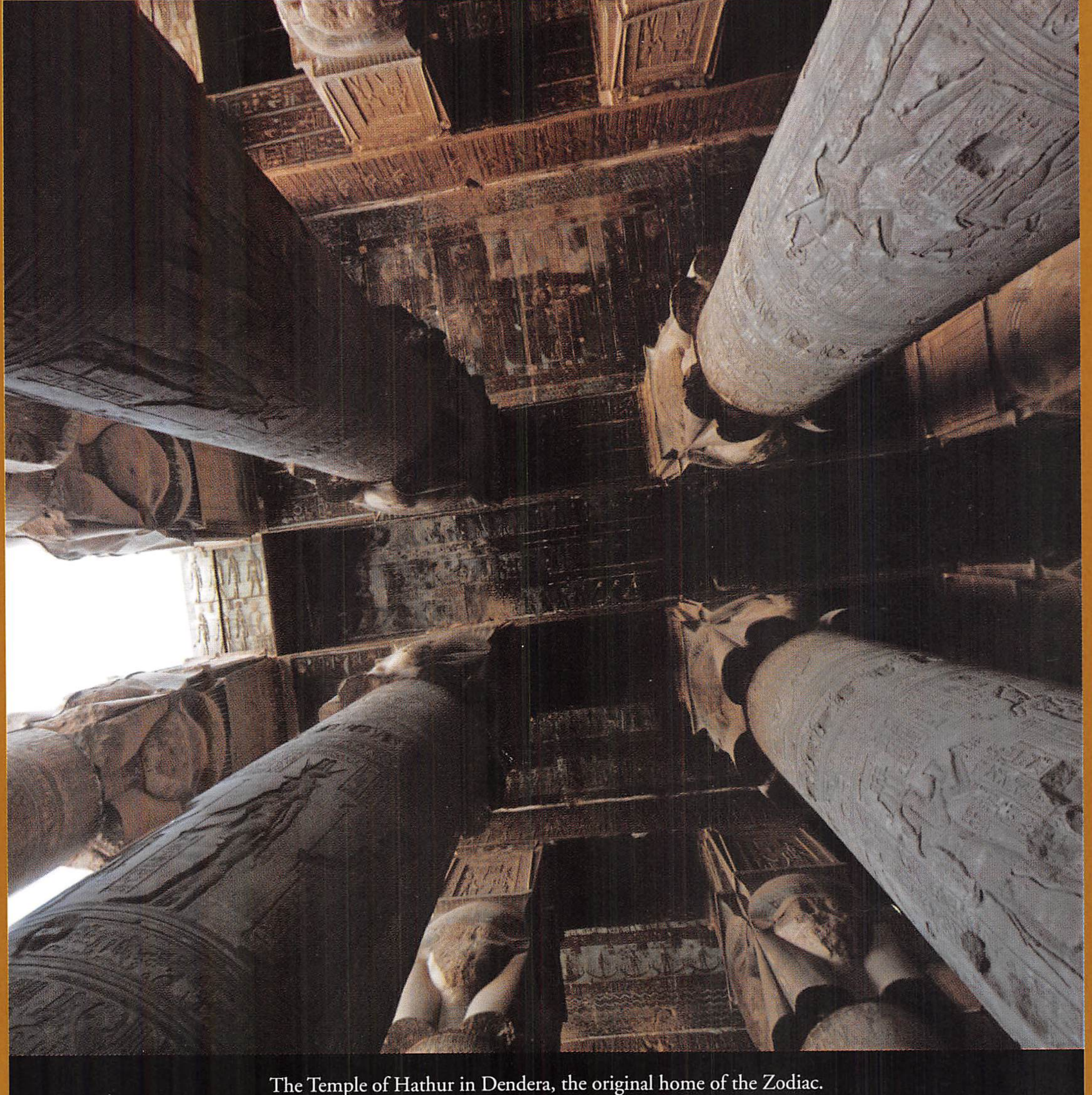


The Zodiac of the Temple of Dendera, now displayed at the Louvre Museum © IFAO.

and Horus. The civil year was thus six hours longer than the lunar (and thus one day longer every four years). Accordingly, the New Year's Day of the solar year and the simplified-year coincided every 1460 years and could be celebrated on the same day. The recording of this important event in A.D.139 has helped historians to identify a relatively exact chronology as similar coincidence might have occurred 1460 years earlier (1317 and 2773 B.C.).

The reign of each king usually began from the date on which he acceded to the throne. Incidents were dated as follows: Year five, season of Shemu (summer), month one (Pachons), day eight, in the reign of His Majesty King So-and-so). There was no consecutive and complete dating system containing the names of the kings. EE

*Dr. Mohamed Saleh*



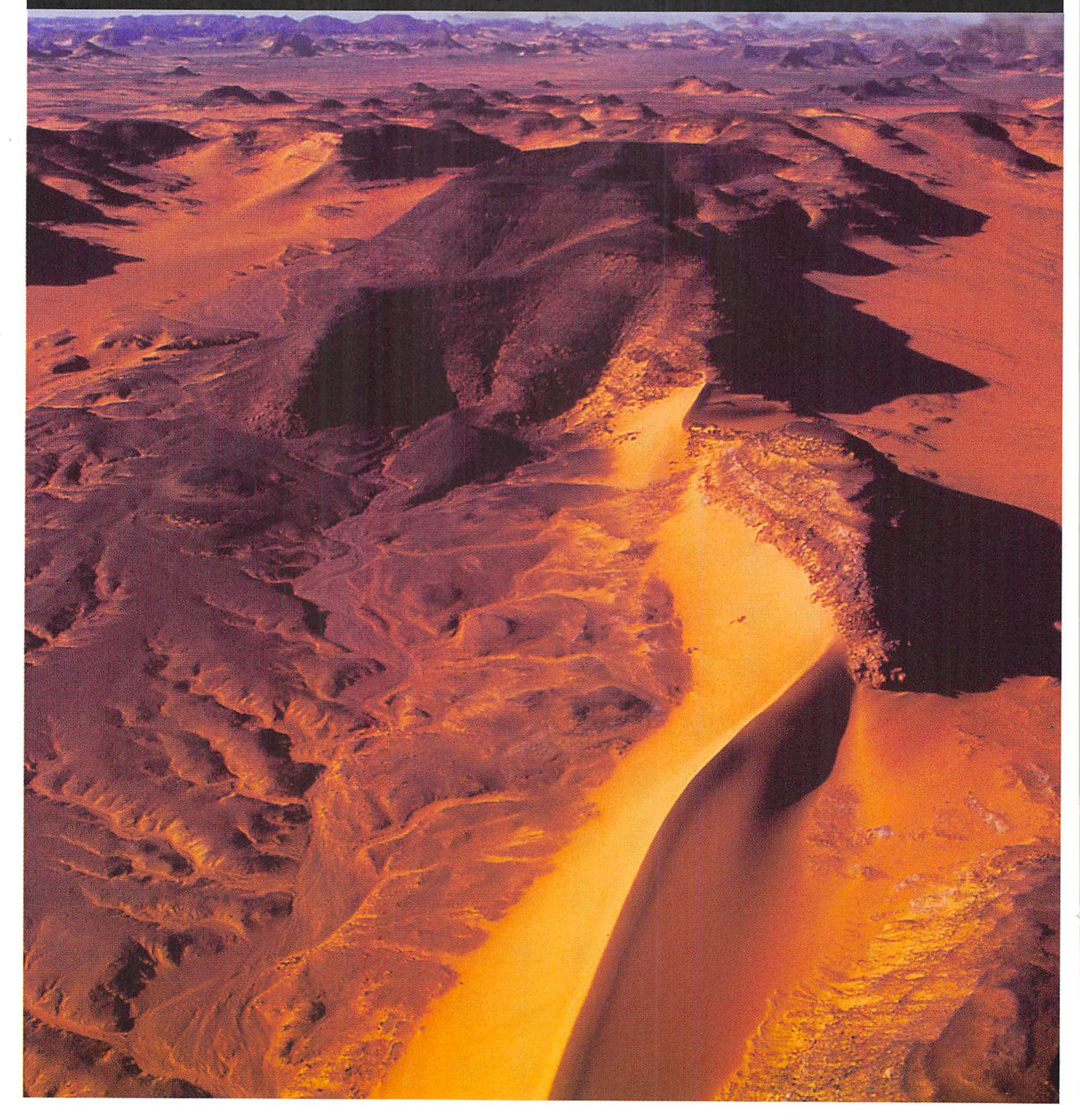
The Temple of Hathur in Dendera, the original home of the Zodiac.

*By Ayman Taher*

Ayman Taher's favorite shots of Egypt are the ones he takes from the sky...

# EGYPT FROM THE SKY

*(South of Lake Naser)*





*Written by: Su Bayfield*

# A SHORT ADVENTURE IN SINAI

Figure of Hathur from the temple.

The sun had been up for several hours by the time it hauled itself up and over the jagged mountains ahead of us, flooding the wilderness with colour, chasing away the deep shadows crouching in the lee of the rocky canyons of the Sinai desert. My three companions and I were sitting on hard bench seats in the back of a Toyota Landcruiser, hanging on to the straps and trying to avoid hitting our heads on the roof of the vehicle as it threw us over half-buried boulders, while our Bedouin driver and guide sat in the front in relative comfort calmly eating apples and smoking cigarettes. A hundred kilometres from anywhere, we were asked to get out and walk because the track over flat rocky plates of Gebel Dalal had suddenly disappeared in a two metre drop. I had to admire the driver's confidence as he edged the Toyota down over the rocks and up the slope to the top of the hill between the outcrops of boulders on the other side of the wadi. I walked up the hill, grateful to stretch my legs and feeling like I had just set foot on the moon after a difficult landing. This bare and rugged landscape of the Sinai interior was a far remove from the gently curving apricot-coloured sand dunes of the Western desert. Another hour of driving along the Wadi Raqaba and we were at our first destination, Gebel Fuga.

The geological site of Gebel Fuga is also known as the Forest of Pillars and I hadn't been sure what to expect, thinking perhaps there was a petrified forest out here on the high desert plateau. Parking the Land cruiser by a lone wind-blasted tree, we all piled out and our two Bedouin men set about making lunch after directing us to walk up over a nearby hillside. Suddenly a vast, timeless horizon opened out before us and there nestled on the slope above the plateau

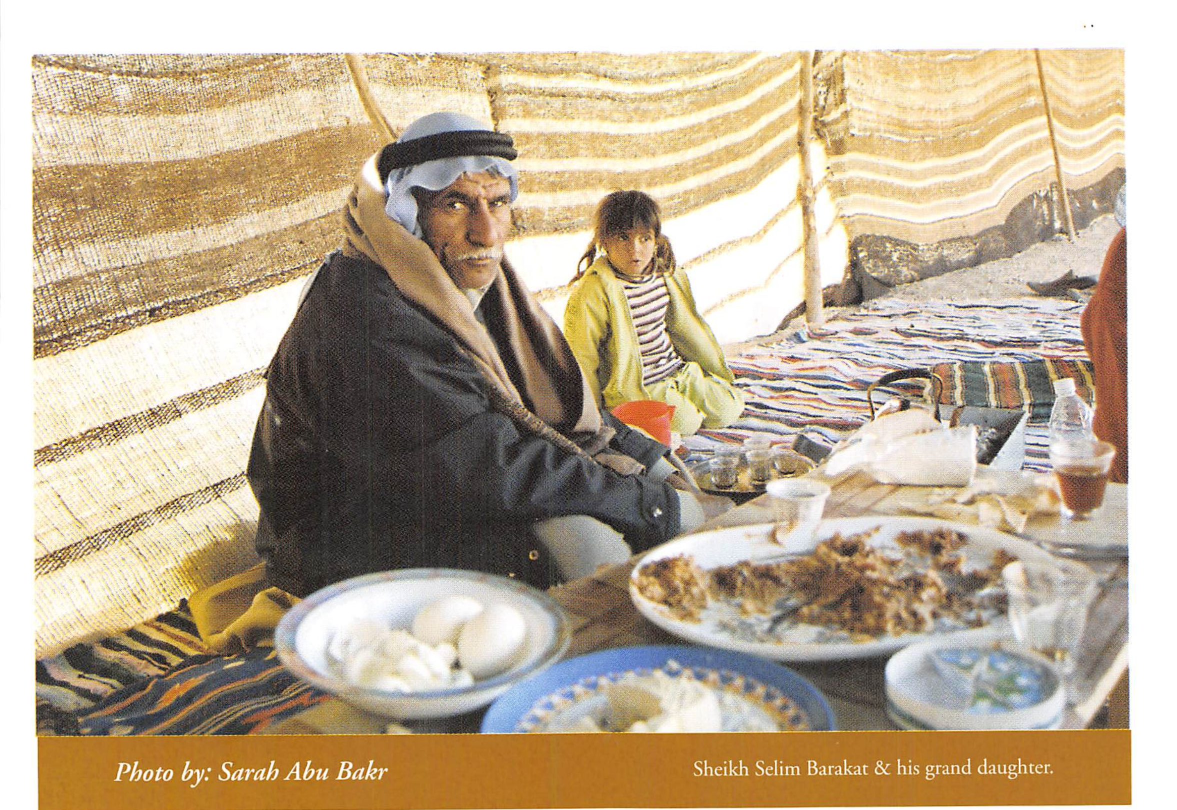


*Photo by: Sarah Abu Bakr*

Sheikh Selim Barakat & his grand daughter.

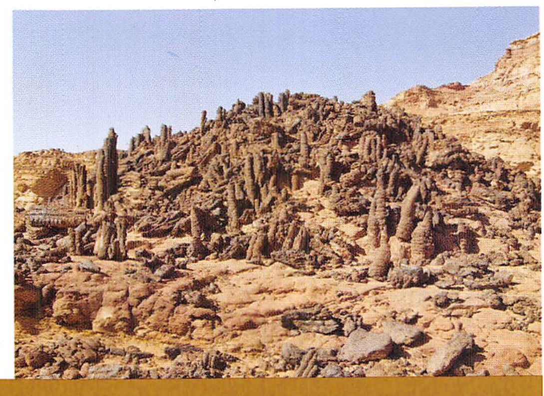


was one of the oddest sites I have ever seen. Strange lava-like twisted columns of black rock seemed to be growing out of the mountain like stalagmites. Some of the columns were a metre or two in height, corkscrewing out of the bedrock as though an ancient giant had wrung out the water from them. Others were toppled and yet more were unformed, mere newborn bubbles strewn over the flat, red sandstone. Although our guide told us that the rocks were volcanic, I later learned that they were composed of deposits of iron oxide, pushed out through the rocks by the pressure of hot water lying deep in the earth and forming hollow tubes of haematite. Meanwhile, lunch was served; a veritable feast of salads, cheese and bread, seemingly conjured up from nothing. And of course the inevitable glasses of strong, sweet Egyptian tea, brewed in a kettle over a small bonfire of gathered twigs.

*Photos by: Sarah Abu Bakr*

The Camp of Sheikh Salem Barakat.





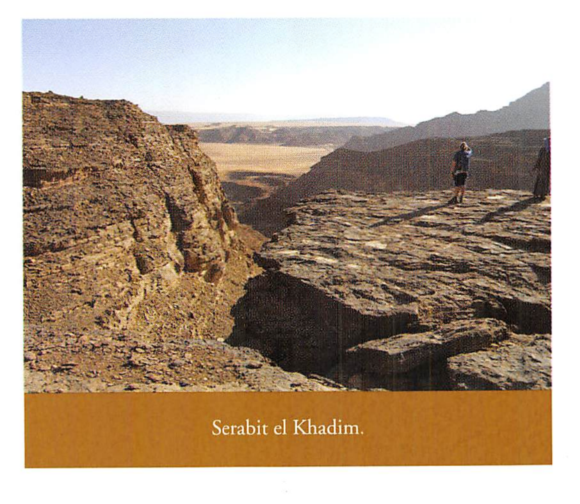
*Photos by: Su Bayfield*

Gebel Fuga, the forest of pillars.

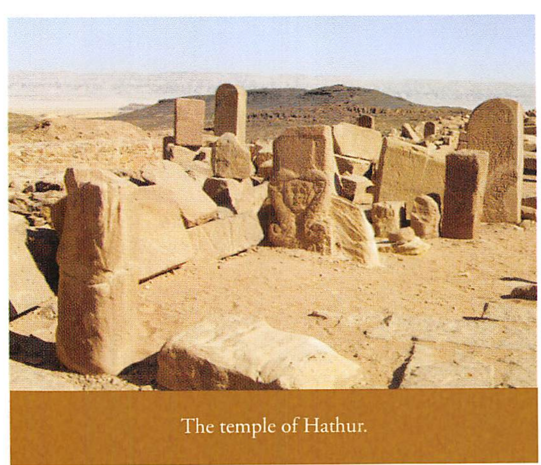
Before the sun had set we had arrived at our next destination, the Bedouin village of Sheikh Barakat, where we were to spend the night. After a day in the wilderness this felt like the epitome of civilization. Although there was a purpose-built tourist camp just up the road, we were accommodated in a guesthouse next to the home of the present village headman, Sheikh Selim Barakat. It wasn't exactly a five-star hotel but we were made very welcome with glasses of tea, then more tea, then dinner, as we watched the sun go down behind the high ring of mountains surrounding us. Once darkness settled over the village there was nothing to do but snuggle into our sleeping bags, lie on top of heaps of rugs in the open courtyard of our lodgings and watch the pale sliver of moon glide across a velvet sky so devoid of artificial light that the shadow of every star that ever shone could be witnessed.

By 7.00am next morning we were once more rattling around in the back of the Land cruiser on the short drive to the base of Mount Serabit, the main destination of our little expedition. A local guide from the village took the lead on a precarious climb up the sheer slope of the eastern side of the mountain to the top, the Temple of Hathur at Serabit el-Khadim. Built by Semite labourers during the 12$^{th}$ Dynasty, the temple stands on a huge rocky outcrop, 850 metres above sea level, surrounded by a vast area of turquoise mines dating mostly from the Pharaonic Middle Kingdom.

It is said that a local deity, Soped, 'Lord of the Eastern Desert' was first worshipped here, but from the beginning the temple had a dual purpose, both to honour the goddess Hathur who acted as guide to the turquoise expeditions and also to praise the rulers who sent the expeditions.



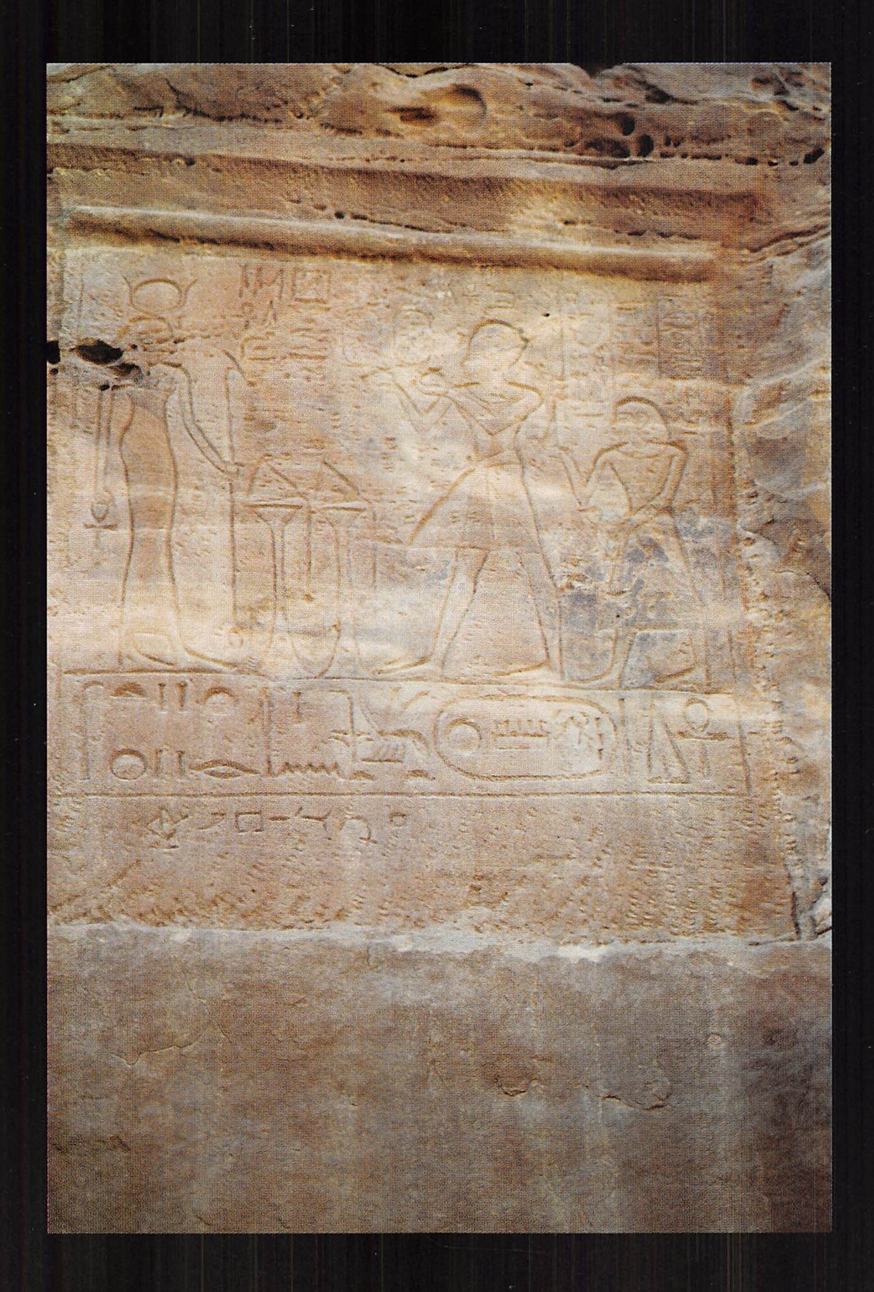
Serabit el Khadim.



The temple of Hathur.



Goddess Hathur, Guardian of the Turquoise Expeditions.



New Kingdom inscriptions at Serabit el Khadim.

***Photos by: Sarah Abu Bakr***

Temple of Hathur at Serabit el Khadim.

*Photos by: Sarah Abu Bakr*

Part of the Temple of Hathur at Serabit el Khadim.

The archaeological site was bounded by a reconstructed Middle Kingdom enclosure wall and recent conservation work has provided two paths for visitors, which follow the two ancient processional routes to the rock-cut shrines at the eastern end of the site, the sanctuaries of Hathur and Ptah. Because the original plan of the temple was expanded and reconstructed by successive kings, it was not easy to visualise the layout, especially as the remains were scattered and ruined and the inscriptions and decoration of the temple were in poor condition. I was very grateful for a detailed plan on a notice board, provided by the Supreme Council of Egyptian Antiquities. Before long the sun was burning down relentlessly. There was no shade in the temple and by mid-day our Bedu guide was hot and restless. He wanted to get home for his siesta, but I would have been happy to spend all day reading the endless rows of commemorative stele erected by ancient miners, memorials in stone which often gave the dates and details of their missions.

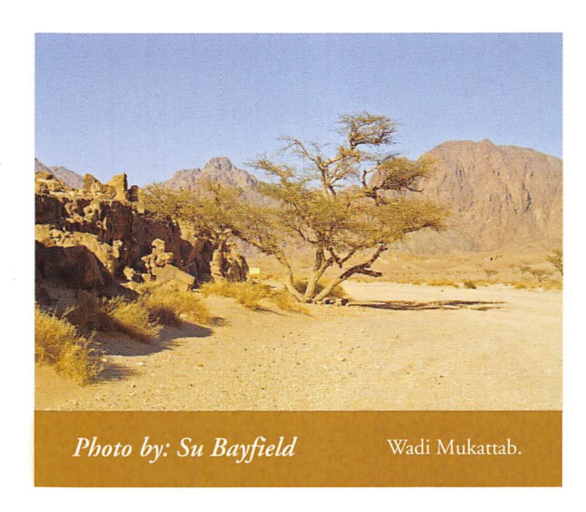


*Photo by: Su Bayfield* Wadi Mukattab.

The remote location of the temple was awe inspiring and the views over the mountain and desert landscape were fabulous. But there was still more to this site. The long descent down the mountain on the western side was much easier, with a wide new sloping path bordered by containing walls.

We briefly stopped at cliff face called by the Bedouin, Rod el-Air, where depictions of boats and animals, along with texts dating from the Middle and New Kingdom were carved and bruised onto the rock. At the bottom of the mountain, beside a new visitors' centre, our transport was waiting to take us on through the desert to our next destination.

Wadi Mukattab, whose name means the 'Valley of Writing', runs adjacent to the Wadi Feiran on the western side of the Sinai Peninsular. We stopped at a line of high cliffs basking in a warm, golden, pre-sunset light. The wide sandy bottom of the wadi, punctuated only by scrubby camel thorn and the zig-zag patterns of snake and animal tracks, felt deserted and lonely and hauntingly beautiful. The graffiti on



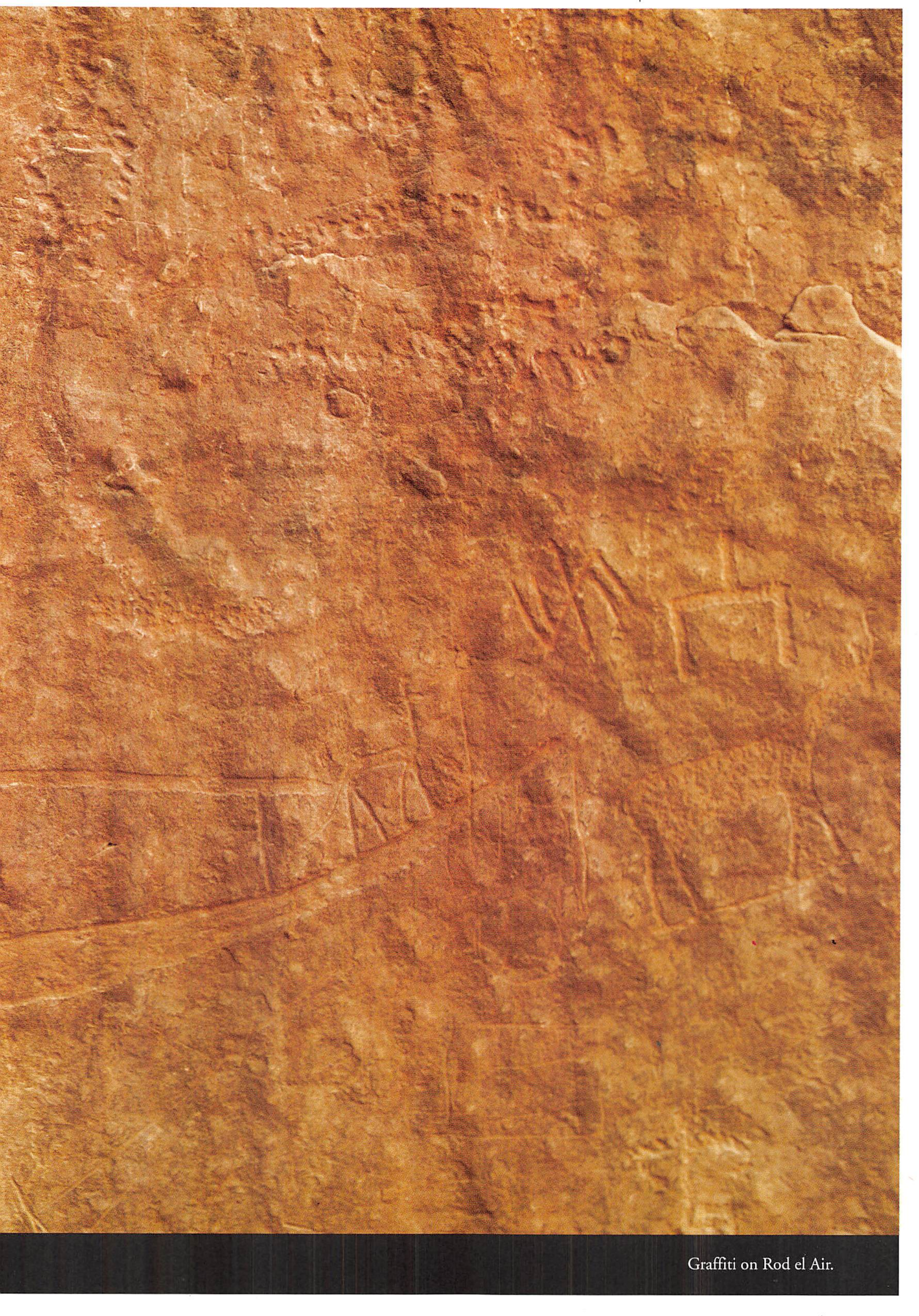
*Photos by: Sarah Abu Bakr*



Depictions of boats and animals dating Back to the middle and New Kingdoms on "Rod el Air".



*Photo by: Su Bayfield*



Graffiti on Rod el Air.

the cliffs at Wadi Mukattab dates mostly from the second and third centuries AD, the time of the Nabataeans, an ancient trading people who came from southern Jordan and Canaan. Their presence can be seen in several places in Sinai, though they are better known for that evocative rose-tinted architecture at their capital city of Petra in Jordan. While my companions and I inspected the graffiti, our driver and guide produced, as if by magic another amazing meal. Many of the carvings were now darkened by shadows and our Bedouin driver was getting restless as dusk would soon come to this lonely waterless place. After another two hours drive we were back on the coast, my desert safari had been brief, but my memories of the wonderful Sinai wilderness will stay with me for a long time.

*Su Bayfield*



Pilgrim's Inscriptions at Wadi Mukattab.

*Photos by: Sarah Abu Bakr*

Pilgrim's Inscriptions at Wadi Mukattab.

*Photo by: Sarah Abu Bakr*

Pilgrim's Inscriptions at Wadi Mukattab.

*Photos by: Monica Hanna*

Inscriptions at Wadi Maghara.

Cartographica is a specialized section for antique and historic maps pertaining to Egypt. Every issue focuses on a single rare map, provides cataloguing data and attempts to analyze date and verify it.

*By Malak Wahba*
mwahba@mcit.gov.eg

# CARTOGRAPHICA

## CATALOGUING DATA:

**Title:** Carte de l'Egypte Ancienne et Moderne. Dressée sur celle du R. P. Sicard et autres assujeties aux observations astronomiques. Par le Sr. Robert de Vaugondy, Géographe ordinaire du Roy. Avec Privilège, 1753.

**Cartographer:** Gilles Robert de Vaugondy

**Date:** 1753

**Publisher:** Gilles and Didier Robert de Vaugondy and Boudet, Paris

**Publication:** Atlas Universel, 1757

**Physical Description:** Double page copper engraved map

**Dimensions:** map 64.5x46.5 cm on sheet 75x58 cm

**Scale:** 1: 1,700,000

**Location:** From the collection of CULTNAT

**Inventory number:** MAP001

## DESCRIPTION:

This copper-engraved hand-coloured French map of Egypt is dated 1753 and signed by Gilles Robert de Vaugondy, Geographer of the King Louis XV of France. It shows Egypt and the entire Nile valley with extensive details of both ancient and modern sites. The cartographer attempted to show the Nile in its true proportions. He also carefully documented towns, villages, ruins, springs and monasteries. The same attention to details extends to the legend (map key), which includes translations of Arabic terms and classical sources for ancient place names. The large title cartouche is decorated with a scene featuring very angular pyramids, a tumbled obelisk, a female, bare-breasted Sphinx and some palm trees.

This map, signed by its engraver Elisabeth Haussard, belongs to the Atlas Universel by Gilles and Didier Robert de Vaugondy, based on the work of R. P. Sicard and others, revealing scientific and scholarly accuracy, and published in 1757 by the cartographers and Boudet royal librarian and publisher, in Paris.

## REFERENCES:

Moreland, C. and David Bannister, Antique Maps. London: Phaidon Press Limited, 1989. p. 136
Cartography Associates, David Rumsey Map Collection. , 2003.




Carte de l'Egypte Ancienne et Moderne

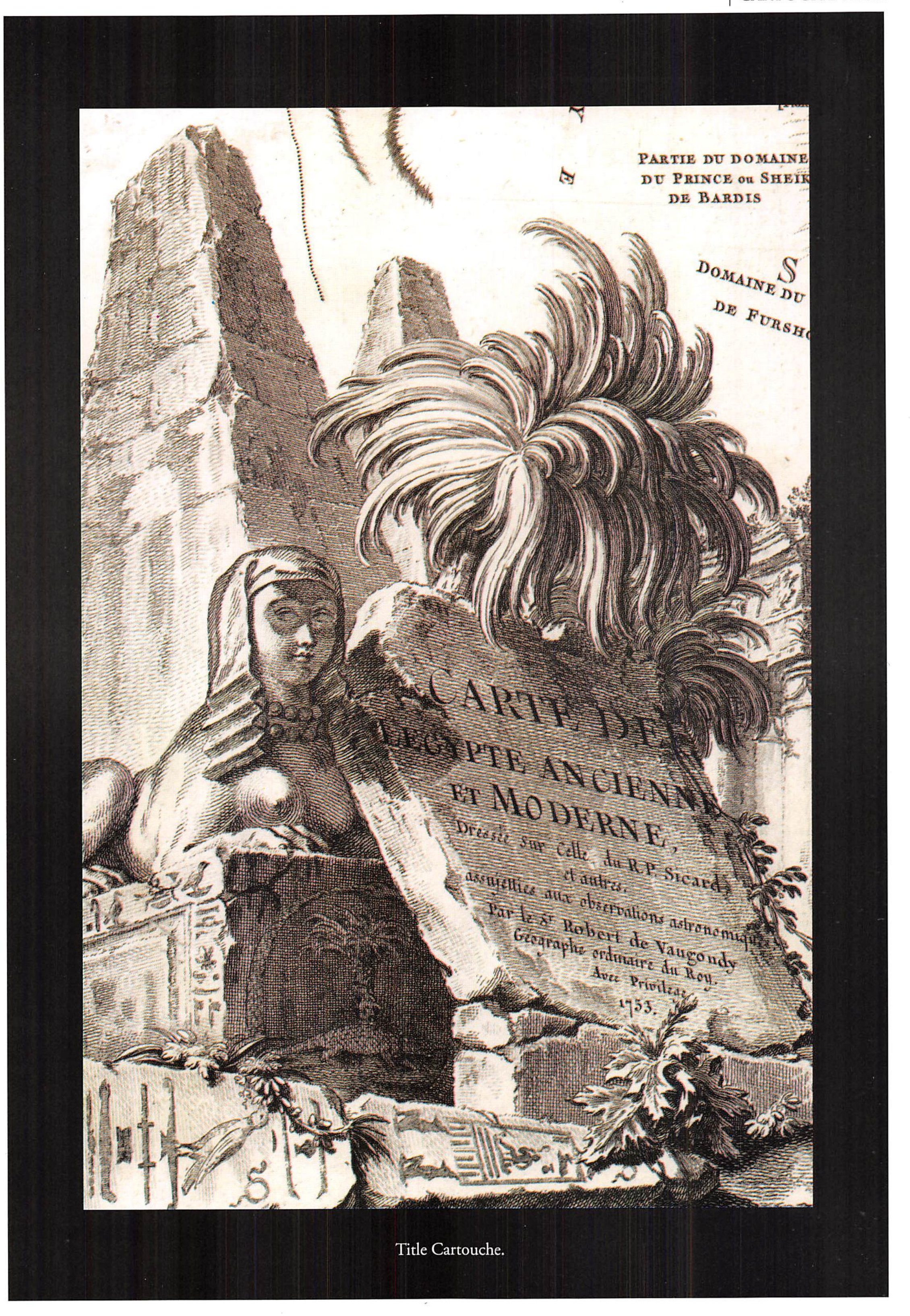


Detail of the Nile Delta.

## GILLES ROBERT DE VAUGONDY 1688-1766
## DIDIER ROBERT DE VAUGONDY c. 1723-1786

The two Robert de Vaugondy brothers who are related to the Nicolas Sanson family, specifically to Sanson's grandson, Pierre Moulard-Sanson, are known for their skillfully produced Atlas Universel. For this publication, the Robert de Vaugondy brothers used some of Sanson's cartographic material along with Jaillot's maps and plates that they acquired after his death in 1712. The older brother, Gilles Robert de Vaugondy, was known as Le Sieur or Monsieur Robert.

Samples of the De Vaugondy brothers' publications:
1748-49 Atlas Portatif (Small quarto)
1757 Atlas Universel
1783, 1793 re-issued
1761 (Didier) Parte de L'Amerique septentrional
1762 Nouvel Atlas Portatif (small folio)
1771, 1813 re-issued




Title Cartouche.





# CULTNAT TRAINING PROGRAM

EDUCATION has NO limits

## I. Training Goals

### A. Vision

Education has no limits. Technology is more like a high-speed car and in order to catch up with this speed we have to obtain a nonstop plan of development.

In order to obtain that, we have to use our internal and external strength points to keep our lead in the information technology world.

### B. Target

Our target is the development of our staff technically, the enhancement of their performance and the attainment of the maximum output in the shortest time with the best quality.

On the other hand, Cultnat has always provided its staff with the warm atmosphere. Cultnat is a place we so call home and in order to keep this atmosphere and that professional courtesy between the managers and the staff, we provide our staff with soft skills training.



## II. Summer Training

### A. Overview of the summer training

Every summer, specifically in July and August, Cultnat Training Department organizes summer training for university students in order to pass our knowledge and experience to the future generations and profit from the new ideas that the students come up with.

We also develop the students' communication skills through interacting with our staff and giving presentations in order to minimize the barrier between being a student and working as a professional.

### B. Modules

Cultnat training department has prepared a number of modules for the summer trainees in different fields as Multimedia, Imaging, Cultural and Natural Heritage.

### C. How to apply

Not like most of the organizations, Cultnat training department has made it easy for the student to apply for our summer training.

Requirements are to be a university student, preferable technical universities, grade starting from Good and own an Egyptian ID. Students can apply by sending a C.V to Cultnat Training Department at the Smart Village, Km 28 Cairo Alexandria Desert Road, building B3.

## III. Internship

### A. Aim

Cultnat Training Department welcomes foreign trainees from all over the world to apply to our internship. The aim is to profit from the foreign experiences in all fields and to be opened to the giant gate of technology around the world.

### B. Joint cooperation

While the internship cooperation between our trainers and trainees take place, new ideas can be generated and developed.

### C. Output

The output of all the previous is to serve Cultnat's best interest and gain as much ideas & knowledge as we can for the development of our proficiency.




# CULTNAT PUBLICATIONS -June 2008

## ATLASES OF THE ARCHEOLOGICAL SITES

- El-Sharkiya Governorate
- Kafr El-Sheikh Governorate
- El-Beheira Governorate
- The Rest of Lower Egypt Governorates
- Faiyum and Beni Suef Governorates
- Asyut Governorate
- El-Minya Governorate
- Sohag Governorate
- Qena Governorate
- Luxor Governorate

## BROCHURES AND FLYERS

- CULTNAT Brochures in Arabic - French - English
- CULTURAMA Flyer

## BOOKS AND CDS

- Abdeen Palace Publications
- Alexandria Graeco-Roman Museum
- The Treasures of King Tutankhamun
- The Contributions of the Arab and Islamic Civilizations to medical Sciences
- The Contributions of the Arab and Islamic Civilizations to Astronomy
- Om-Kolthoum Book and CD
- Salama Hegazy Book and CD
- Sayed Darwish Books and CD
- Abd El-Wahab Books and CD




## CDS

Photographic Heritage of Egypt:
Lehnert & Landrock CD
Cairo Architectural Heritage CD
The Wild World of Egypt CD
Harraz Encyclopedia for Medicinal Plants CD
Botanical Chamber at Karnak CD

## BOOKLETS

Pharaonic Timeline Booklet
Star Riders Booklet
Guide botanique de l'Egypte ancienne
Booklet
Le Palmier Doum Booklet
Le Sycomore Booklet

## POSTCARDS

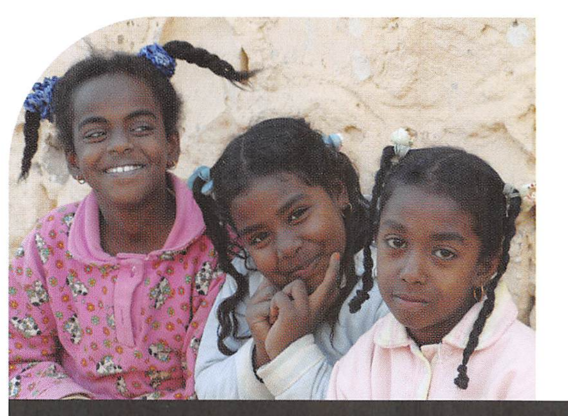
Natural Hertiage Cards
Architectural Hertiage Cards

## PORTFOLIOS

Suwar AL-Kawakib
Memory of Alexandria

## PROMOTIONAL ITEMS

Book Marks
Coasters and Mouse Pads



CULTNAT is a partner in several projects funded by the European Commission, the UNESCO and the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology. In this section of every issue you will be introduced to one of our ongoing projects.

ON THE AGENDA

# NUBIAN Heritage out to the WORLD

CULTNAT (The Center for Documentation of Cultural and Natural Heritage) succeeded in developing good relations with Nubian communities both in Egypt and in Sudan which encouraged the start of a project to document the Nubian heritage, something CULTNAT family was always looking forward to.

Following these efforts, a conference was held titled "Nubia towards the Digitization Age" which led to the signing of the memorandum of understanding between CULTNAT and the General Nubian Club representing all different Nubian Associations at Abu Simbel Village. Audio-visual documentation will be used and great attention will be given to the Nubian traditions, festivities, customs, cuisine and language that is directly connected to the Ancient Egyptian language and threatened by extinction.

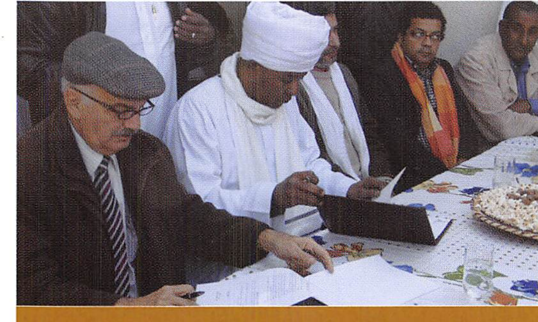
For this purpose, CULTNAT trained Nubian youth on field assembly to do this work themselves in a pioneering step towards more credibility and to give indigenous groups the chance to document their own heritage which was very welcomed and appreciated by the Nubian Community.

Within this frame of work, the results of the documentation process will be disseminated on a web site as well as in the form of publications of which a book titled "Nubia Through Two Eras" by the innovative Egyptian Photographer Antoune Albert who used photography to document the Nubian heritage at the time of displacement and resettlement is already published.



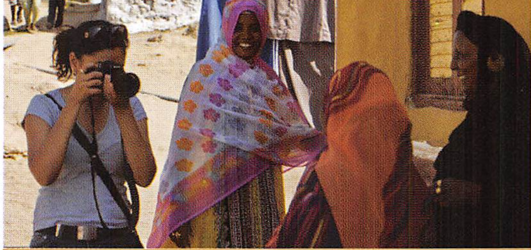


Ayman Khoury & Dr. Fathi Saleh shaking hands with members of the Nubian community after the signing of the protocol.



Signing the protocol.

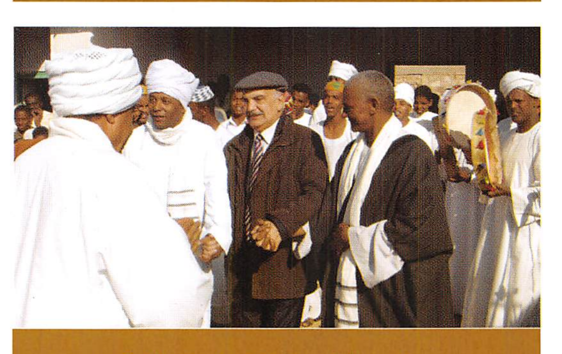




Sama from CULTNAT team taking photos of Nubian women.



A Nubian Woman.

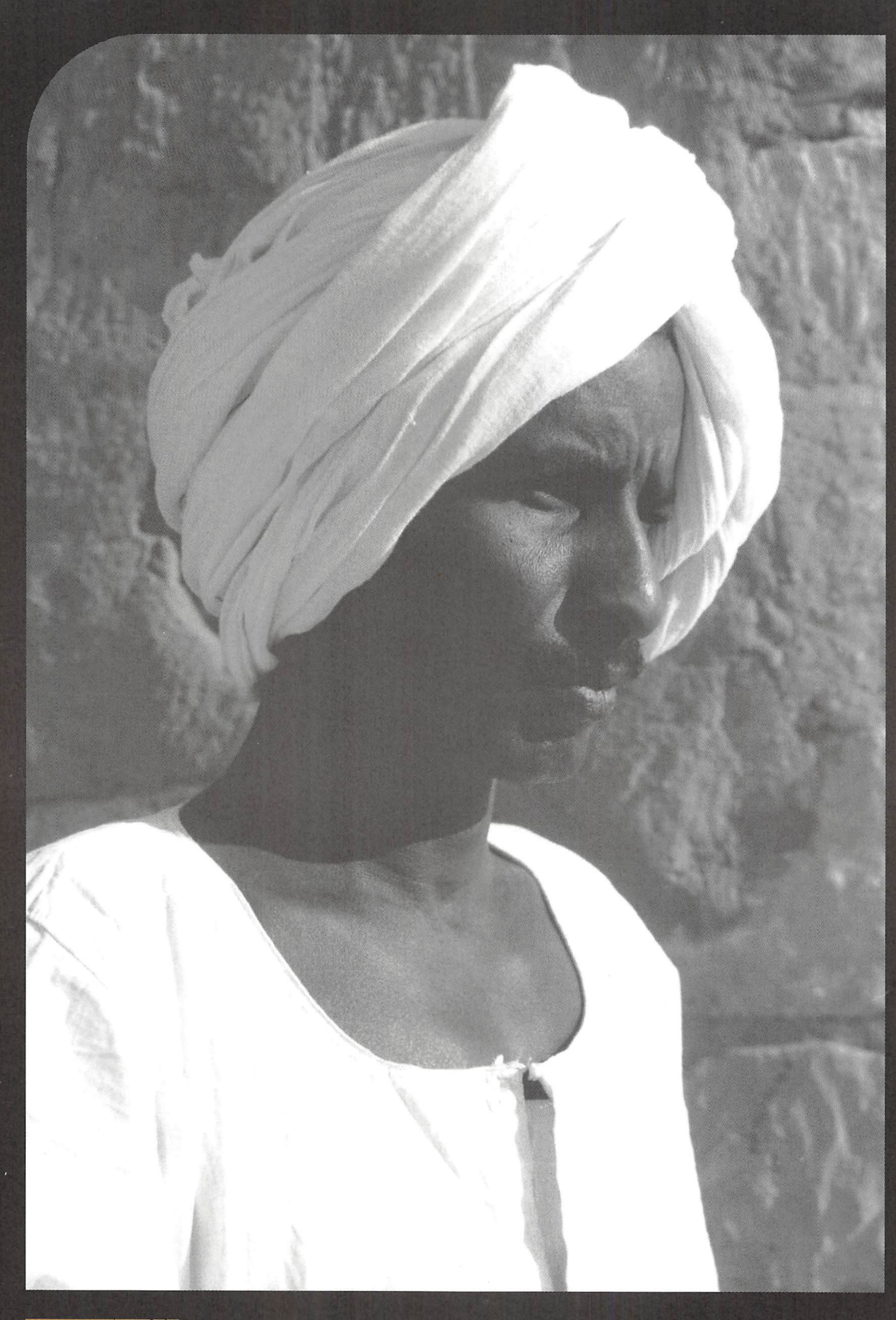


Celebrating the initiation of the project.





"Nubia Through Two Eras", a book by the innovative Egyptian Photographer Antoune Albert



*Photos by: Antoune Albert*

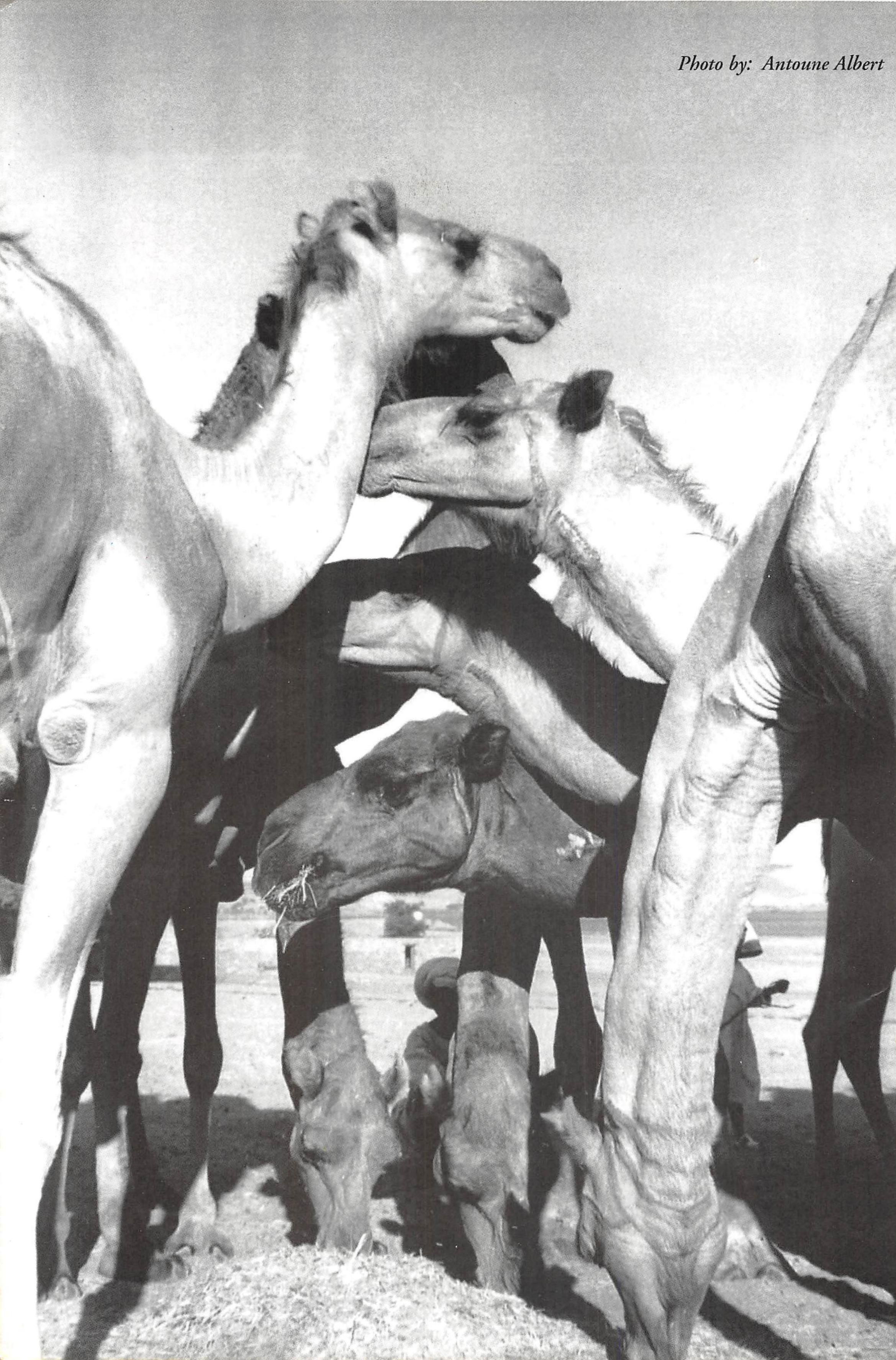
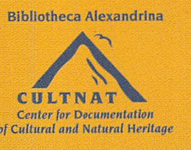


*Photo by: Antoune Albert*



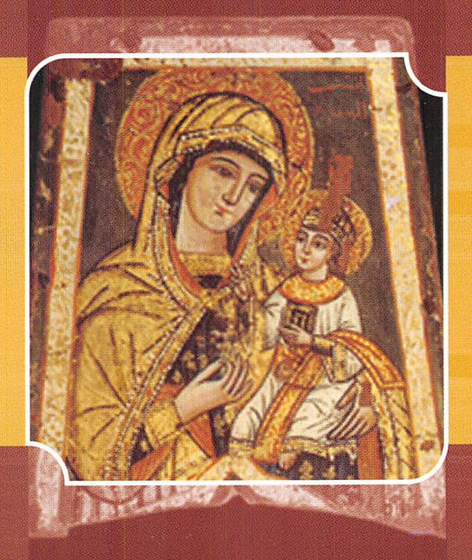


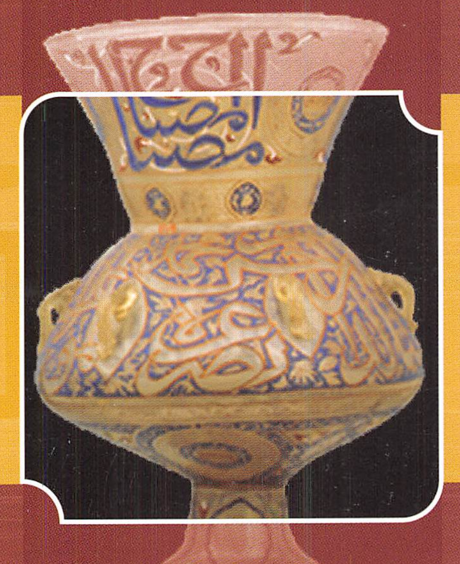




Islamic




سافر دون ان تترك مكانك





Coptic

Voyagez sans quiter
votre domicile

EGYPTE ETERNELLE

www.eternalegypt.org

Digital visit to Egypt @ Soho Square

Sharm El Sheikh

# CULTURAMA

JOURNEY THROUGH TIME





